SPIN-OFF LEGENDS™ CHAPTER 22

SECRET ORIGINS™

STARRING

SUICIDE SQUAD™

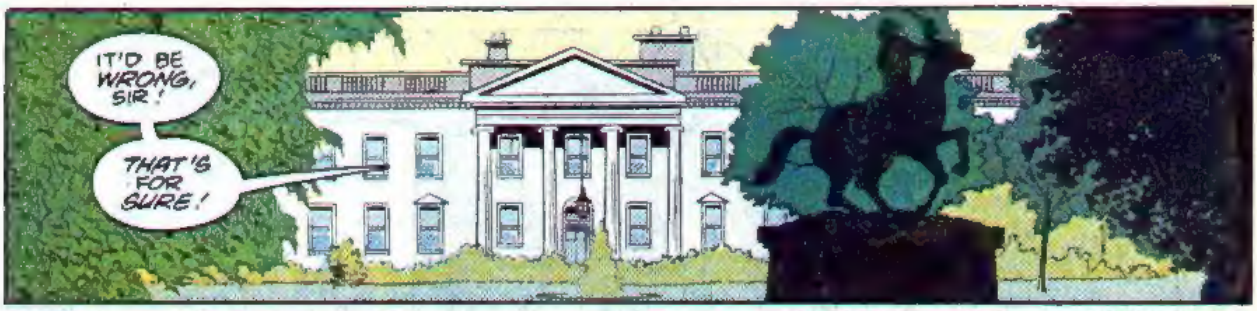
BY OSTRANDER, McDONNELL & HUNT

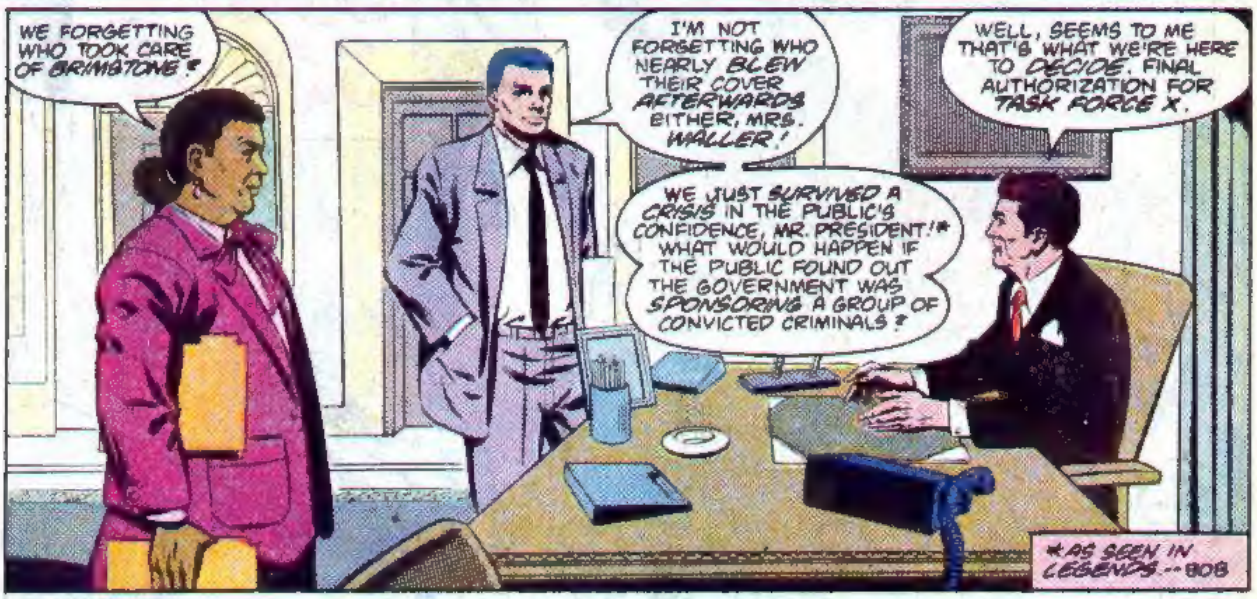
14
$1.25
CAN. $1.75
U.K. 60p
MAY 87

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

40 YEARS IN THE MAKING! THE FULL STORY REVEALED AT LAST!

THE HISTORY OF THE DC UNIVERSE is *must* reading


IT'D BE WRONG, SIR!
THAT'S FOR SURE!


WE FORGETTING WHO TOOK CARE OF BRIMSTONE?
I'M NOT FORGETTING WHO NEARLY BLEW THEIR COVER AFTERWARDS EITHER, MRS. WALLER!
WELL, SEEMS TO ME THAT'S WHAT WE'RE HERE TO DECIDE. FINAL AUTHORIZATION FOR TASK FORCE X.
WE JUST SURVIVED A CRISIS IN THE PUBLIC'S CONFIDENCE, MR. PRESIDENT!* WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THE PUBLIC FOUND OUT THE GOVERNMENT WAS SPONSORING A GROUP OF CONVICTED CRIMINALS?
*AS SEEN IN LEGENDS--#08

LOOK, MR. PRESIDENT, I'M NOT SAYING THERE AREN'T RISKS INVOLVED OR ROUGH EDGES TO SMOOTH OUT.
BUT WE KNEW ALL THAT GOING IN.

MRS. WALLER, SARGE STEEL HERE ISN'T THE ONLY ONE WHO'S HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT ALL THIS. I DO, TOO. SHOULD THE U.S. BE INVOLVED WITH SOMETHING LIKE THIS?

TASK FORCE X
ALWAYS HAS BEEN BEFORE, SIR.

WHAT'S THIS?
BROUGHT ALONG SOME ARTILLERY, MR. PRESIDENT. A LITTLE HISTORY. YOU MIGHT SAY THOSE FILES CONTAIN...

the secret origin of the SUICIDE SQUAD™

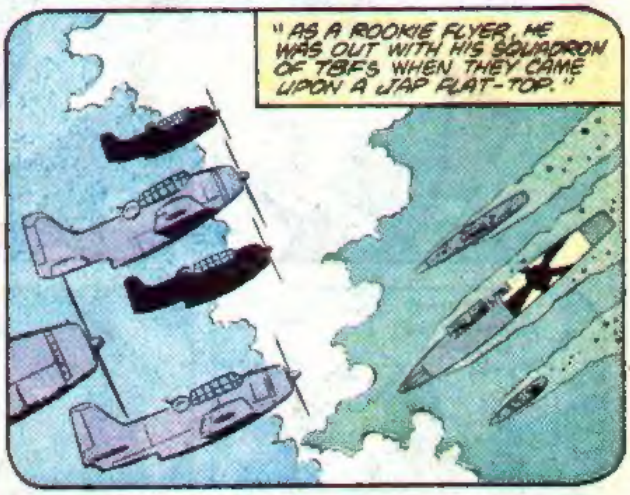
JOHN OSTRANDER
WRITER
LUKE McDONNELL
PENCILLER
DAVE HUNT
INKER
ALBERT DE GUZMAN
LETTERER
CARL GAFFORD
COLORIST
ROBERT GREENBERGER
EDITOR

"GOT TO START BACK IN WORLD WAR II, ON DINOSAUR ISLAND, AND AN ACTION CODE-NAMED 'THE WAR THAT TIME FORGOT!' A RAG-TAG GROUP LABELED SQUADRON 8 IS ASSIGNED AND THEY SOON CALL THEMSELVES THE SUICIDE SQUADRON, BECAUSE BEING ASSIGNED TO IT WAS CONSIDERED GROUNDS FOR SUICIDE!

SECRET ORIGINS 14 Published monthly by DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10103. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to SECRET ORIGINS, DC Comics Inc., Subscription Dept., P.O. Box 1981, New York, NY 10185. Annual subscription rate $15.00. Outside U.S.A. $17.00 in U.S. funds. Copyright © 1987 DC Comics, Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of DC Comics Inc. Advertising Representative: Print Advertising Representatives, 355 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017 (212) 391-3400. Printed in U.S.A.
DC Comics Inc. A Warner Communications Company

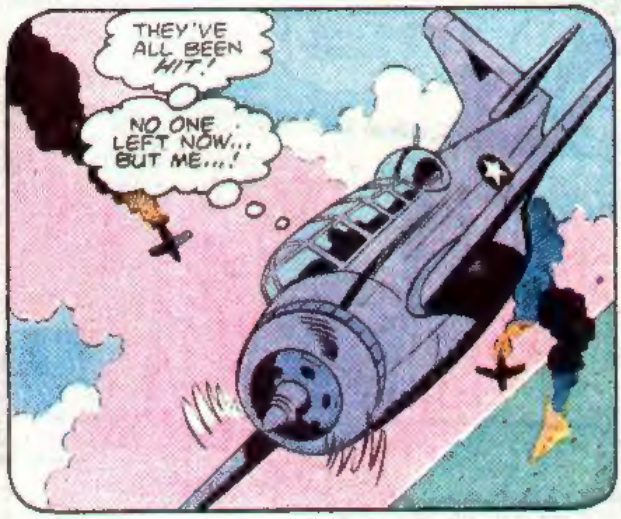
GOOD, BAD, INDIFFERENT--THEY'RE STILL OUR MEN. WE'VE GOT TO GIVE THEM A FIGHTING CHANCE TO SURVIVE.
THEY NEED A C.O., TOUGH, MEAN, AND COMMITTED, WHO'LL MAKE THEM WORK TOGETHER!

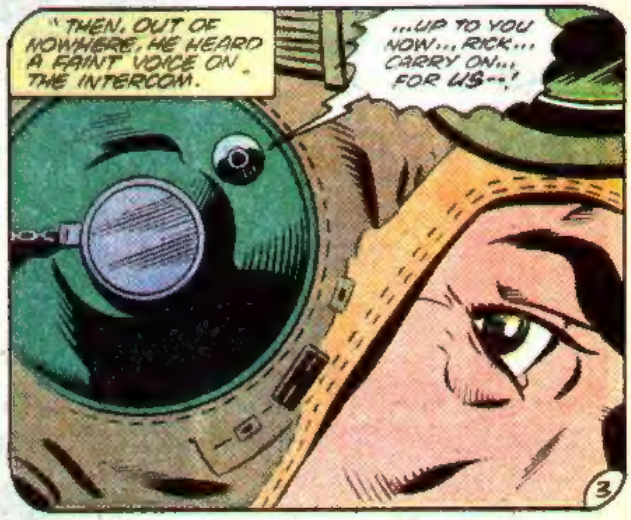
I THINK CAPT. RICHARD MONTGOMERY FLAG IS THE MAN AND HERE'S WHY.

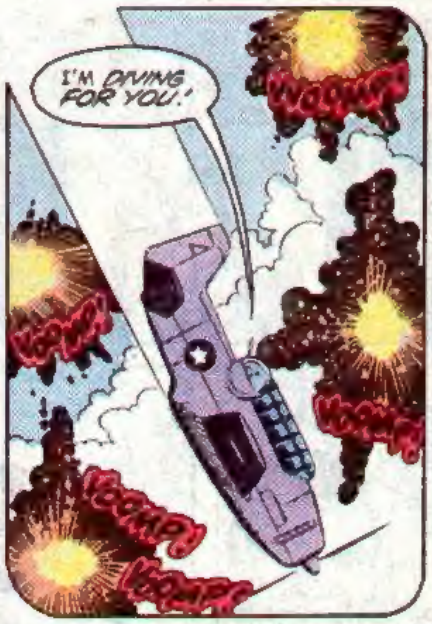

"AS A ROOKIE FLYER, HE WAS OUT WITH HIS SQUADRON OF TBF'S WHEN THEY CAME UPON A JAP FLAT-TOP."

LET'S GET THAT FLAT-TOP, GANG! USE ATTACK PLAN THREE! RICK, YOU COME IN LAST. WE'LL PAVE THE WAY!

THEY'RE TAKING ALL THE RISKS, SO THERE'LL BE LESS TO CLOBBER ME WHEN I MAKE MY RUN!
LOOK AT THAT FLAK!
BOOM!
BUM-BOOM


THEY'VE ALL BEEN HIT!
NO ONE LEFT NOW... BUT ME...!


"THEN, OUT OF NOWHERE, HE HEARD A FAINT VOICE ON THE INTERCOM.
...UP TO YOU NOW... RICK... CARRY ON... FOR US--!



CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE FOLLOWING

WANTED

INTERPOL *BULLETIN*

Temporem autem quiveud overtist ut or repudiand tenetury sapiente.

MINDBOGGLER

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed diam eiusmod tempor incidunt ut labore et dolore magna aliquam erat enim ad minimim veniam quis nostrud exercation ullamcorpor lobortis nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel dolor in reprehendere in voluptate velit esse molestiae con rium dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. At vero eos et accusam et dignissim qui blandit praesent luptatum delenit aigue duos molestias excepteur sint occaecat cupidat non proident, sunt tempor cupidatat qui officia deserunt molit anim id est laborum et dolor fuga. Et derelud facilis est er expedit distinct. Nam liber a tempor cum eligend optio comque nihil quod a impedit anim id quod maxim placeam omnis es voluptas assumenda est, omnis dolor repellend eum quinibus et aur rum e debit aut hum rerum necessit ibus saepe ex repudiand prov ri molestia non alias recusand. Itaque earund tenetury sapiente delectus au aut prefer endis dolorib asperiore. Hanc ego cum tene sententiam, quid est cur verear ne ad eam non accommodare nosi ros quos iu paulo ante cum memorie n sum.

WANTED: BY THE E.B.I.

BRONZE TIGER

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adi, eiusmod tempor incidunt ut labore et dolore magna ad minimim veniami quis.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed diam eiusmod tempor incidunt ut labore et dolore magna aliquam erat enim ad minimim veniami quis nostrud exercation ullamcorpor lobortis nisi ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel dolor in reprehendend in voluptate velit esse molestiae con rium dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. At vero eos et accusam et dignissim qui blandit praesent luptatum delenit aigue duos molestias excepteur sint occaecat cupidat non proident, sunt tempor cupidatat qui officia deserunt molit anim id est laborum et dolor fuga. Et derelud facilis est er expedit distinct. Nam liber a tempor cum eligend optio comque nihil quod a impedit.

DANGEROUS

Et harumd dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed diam eiusmod tempor incidunt ut labore et dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.

At vero eos et sed diam voluptua. At vero eos et accusam et justo duo dolores et ea rebum. Stet clita kasd gubergren, no sea takimata sanctus est Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consetetur sadipscing elitr, sed diam nonumy eirmod tempor invidunt ut labore et dolore magna aliquyam erat, sed diam voluptua. At vero eos et accusam et justo duo dolores et ea rebum.

Nam liber a tempor cum soluta nobis eleifend option congue nihil imperdiet doming id quod mazim placerat facer possim assum. Typi non habent claritatem insitam; est usus legentis in iis qui facit eorum claritatem. Investigationes demonstraverunt lectores legere me lius quod ii legunt saepius. Claritas est etiam processus dynamicus, qui sequitur mutationem consuetudium lectorum. Mirum est notare quam littera gothica, quam nunc putamus parum claram, anteposuerit litterarum formas humanitatis per seecula quarta decima et quinta decima. Eodem modo typi, qui nunc nobis videntur parum clari, fiant sollemnes in futurum.

WANTED FOR CRIME

PLASTIQUE

Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel eum iriure dolor in hendrerit in vulputate velit esse molestie consequat, vel illum dolore eu feugiat nulla facilisis at vero eros et accumsan et iusto odio dignissim qui blandit praesent luptatum zzril delenit augue duis dolore te feugait nulla facilisi. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.

INTERPOL *BULLETIN*

Lorem ipsum dolor eiusmod tempor ad minimim veniami aliquip ex ea.

DEADSHOT

Hanc ego cum tene sententiam, quid est cur verear ne ad eam non accommodare nosi ros quos iu paulo ante cum memorie n sum. Nos amice et nobiliter defendere coepimus, quod nec ab iis qui id facere debent, nec a quibus id fieri oportet, neque omnino a quibus id exspectari potest, nec denique a quibus id ullo modo fieri potest, nec denique quomodo id fieri possit, nec denique cur id fieri debeat, nec denique ubi id fieri possit, nec denique quando id fieri possit, nec denique qui id facere possint. Nos id facere possumus, quia id nos facere oportet, neque id nos facere prohibet quicquam. Quis enim id prohibere audeat? Quis id nos facere non oportere putet? Quis id nos facere non posse diffidat? Quis id nos facere non posse desperet? Quis id nos facere non posse arbitretur? Quis id nos facere non posse existimet? Quis id nos facere non posse suspicetur? Quis id nos facere non posse putet? Quis id nos facere non posse dicat? Quis id nos facere non posse credat? Quis id nos facere non posse intellegat? Quis id nos facere non posse sentiat? Quis id nos facere non posse videat? Quis id nos facere non posse audiat? Quis id nos facere non posse cognoscat? Quis id nos facere non posse intellegat? Quis id nos facere non posse sentiat? Quis id nos facere non posse videat? Quis id nos facere non posse audiat? Quis id nos facere non posse cognoscat?

WANTED: BY THE E.B.I.

LOREM IPSUM DOLOR SIT AMET ALIQUAM ERAT VOLUPAT UT ENIM

ENCHANTRESS

Invitat igitur vera ratio bene sentire ad iustitiam qui intent aut inutile fact est cond que neg facile.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed diam eiusmod tempor incidunt ut labore et dolore magna aliquam erat enim ad minimim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel dolore in reprehendere in voluptate velit esse molestiae con rium dolore eu fugiat nulla pariatur. At vero eos et accusam et dignissim qui blandit praesent luptatum delenit aigue duos molestias excepteur sint occaecat cupidat non proident, sunt tempor cupidatat qui officia deserunt molit anim id est laborum et dolor fuga. Et derelud facilis est er expedit distinct. Nam liber a tempor cum eligend optio comque nihil quod a impedit anim id quod maxim placeam omnis es voluptas assumenda est, omnis dolor repellend eum quinibus et aur rum e debit aut hum rerum necessit ibus saepe ex repudiand prov ri molestia non alias recusand. Itaque earund tenetury sapiente delectus au aut prefer endis dolorib asperiore. Hanc ego cum tene sententiam, quid est cur verear ne ad eam non accommodare nosi ros quos iu paulo ante cum memorie n sum.

WANTED: BY THE E.B.I.

CAPTAIN BOOMERANG

Temporem autem quiveud overtist ut or repudiand tenetury sapiente.

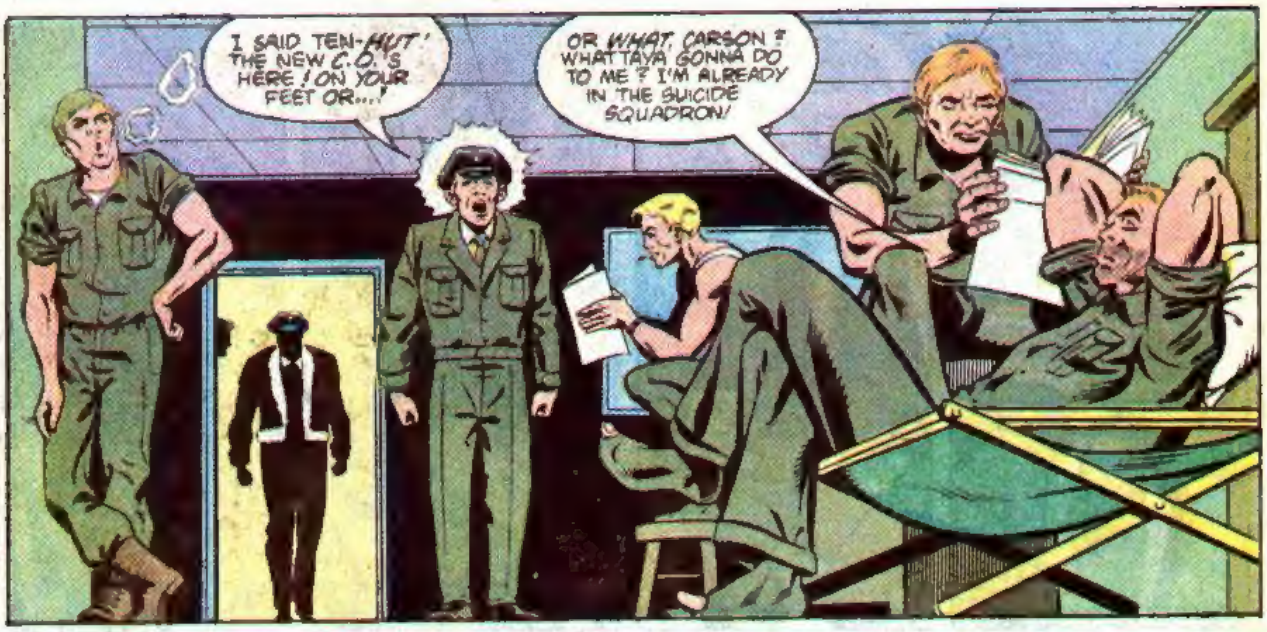
SUICIDE SQUAD*

THEY GET A CHANCE TO DIE FOR THEIR COUNTRY

A NEW DC MONTHLY SERIES. ON SALE IN FEBRUARY

JOHN OSTRANDER
LUKE McDONNELL
KARL KESEL

* TM & Copyright © 1986 DC Comics Inc.


I SAID TEN-HUT! THE NEW C.O.'S HERE! ON YOUR FEET OR...!
OR WHAT, CARSON? WHAT'YA GONNA DO TO ME? I'M ALREADY IN THE SUICIDE SQUADRON!

ON YOUR FEET, SOLDIER!
NOT A CHANCE! BASHFUL BENJY NEEDS HIS BEAUTY SLEEP!

I SAID ON YOUR FEET!
WHAM!

SO HELP ME, IF YOU WASN'T HIDING BEHIND THOSE TIN BARS...!

GOT FISTS TO GO WITH THAT LIP!

RIGHT HERE! HAW!
WHAM!

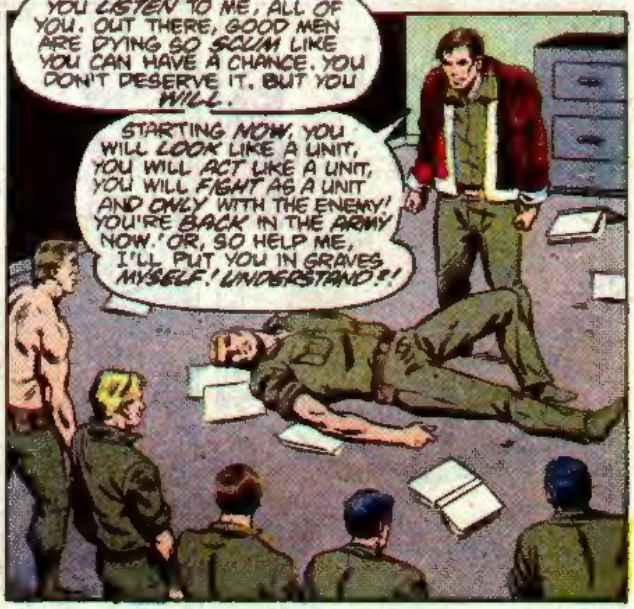
YOU GOT MY ATTENTION.

GOTTA EARN MY RESPECT!
WHAM

KRAK

CHUD

WHAM!
UHNG!


YOU LISTEN TO ME, ALL OF YOU. OUT THERE, GOOD MEN ARE DYING SO SCUM LIKE YOU CAN HAVE A CHANCE. YOU DON'T DESERVE IT. BUT YOU WILL.
STARTING NOW, YOU WILL LOOK LIKE A UNIT, YOU WILL ACT LIKE A UNIT, YOU WILL FIGHT AS A UNIT AND ONLY WITH THE ENEMY! YOU'RE BACK IN THE ARMY NOW! OR, SO HELP ME, I'LL PUT YOU IN GRAVES MYSELF! UNDERSTAND?!

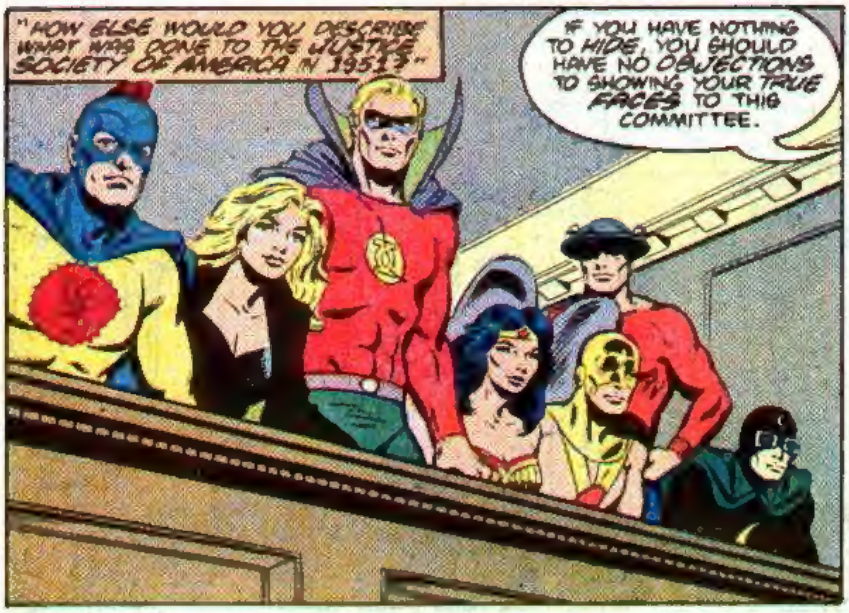
HA HA HA! AH, GREAT STUFF!
TOO BAD THE MATERIAL STAYED CLASSIFIED AFTER THE WAR. IT WOULD'VE MADE A GREAT MOVIE. FLAG WOULD'VE BEEN A GREAT PART FOR ME.
WAS HE SUCCESSFUL?

"WELL, THEY MAY NOT HAVE LOVED EACH OTHER ANY BETTER, BUT THEIR EFFECTIVENESS INCREASED AND THEIR MORTALITY RATE DROPPED. THEY FOUGHT TOGETHER RIGHT THROUGH THE END OF THE WAR."

"AFTER THE WAR, FLAG MARRIED SHARON RACE, WHO WAS A COUSIN OF HIS OLD FRIEND J. E. B. STUART.

"THE SQUADRON WAS REACTIVATED DURING THE KOREAN WAR AND SAW QUITE A BIT OF ACTION. BUT THEY DIDN'T FINISH UP THERE."

THIS NEXT FILE STARTS WITH ONE OF THE MORE SHAMEFUL INCIDENTS IN THIS COUNTRY'S HISTORY.
NOW. NOW, MRS. WALLER...

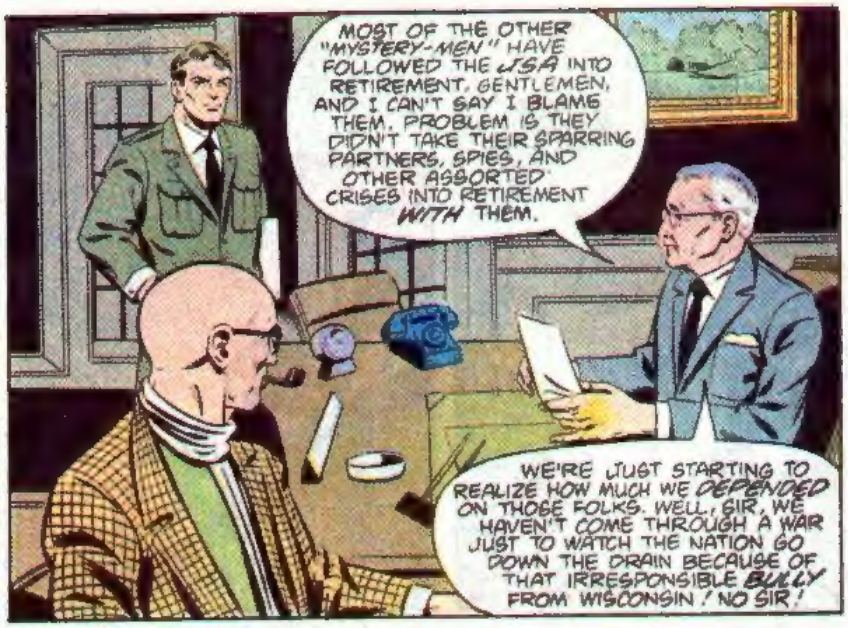

"HOW ELSE WOULD YOU DESCRIBE WHAT WAS DONE TO THE JUSTICE SOCIETY OF AMERICA IN 1951?"
IF YOU HAVE NOTHING TO HIDE, YOU SHOULD HAVE NO OBJECTIONS TO SHOWING YOUR TRUE FACES TO THIS COMMITTEE.

THAT WAY THE COMMITTEE CAN START CLEARING YOU OF THE CHARGES THAT HAVE BEEN LEVELED AGAINST YOU.

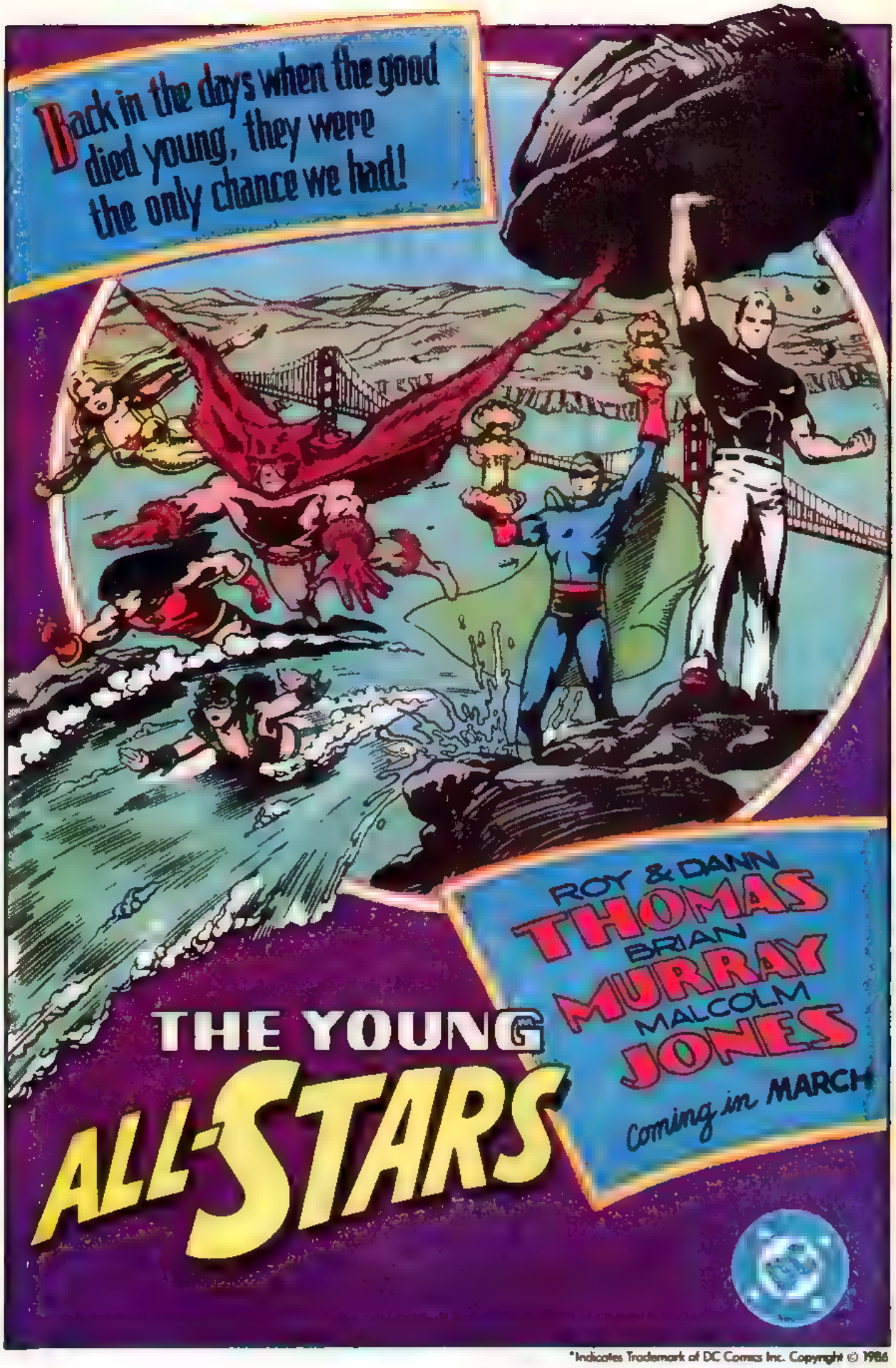
SENATOR, WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, OUR PRIVATE LIVES ARE OUR OWN.

THESE CHARGES ARE NOTHING MORE THAN INSUBSTANTIAL RUMORS. WE RESPECTFULLY DECLINE TO UNMASK PUBLICLY.
RATHER THAN CONFRONTATION, WE'LL CHOOSE RETIREMENT. AS OF NOW, THE JSA IS DISBANDED.

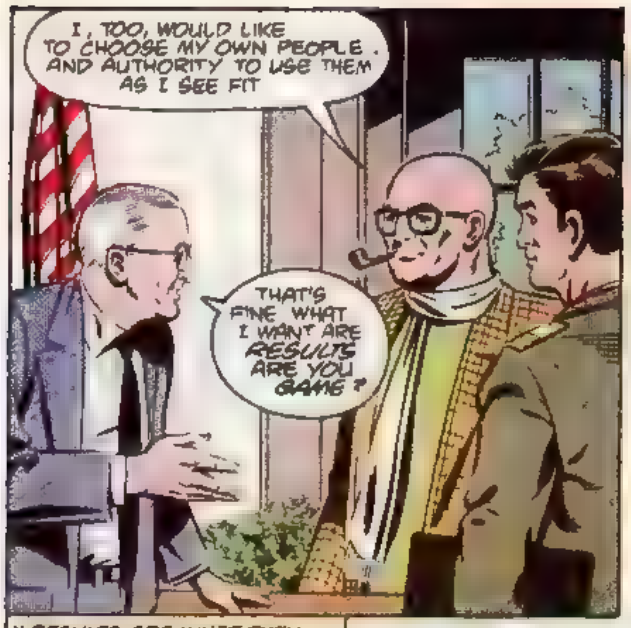
"DR. FATE MUST HAVE RIGGED THEIR DEPARTURE. THE JSA WAS NOT TO BE SEEN AGAIN PUBLICLY FOR A DECADE.



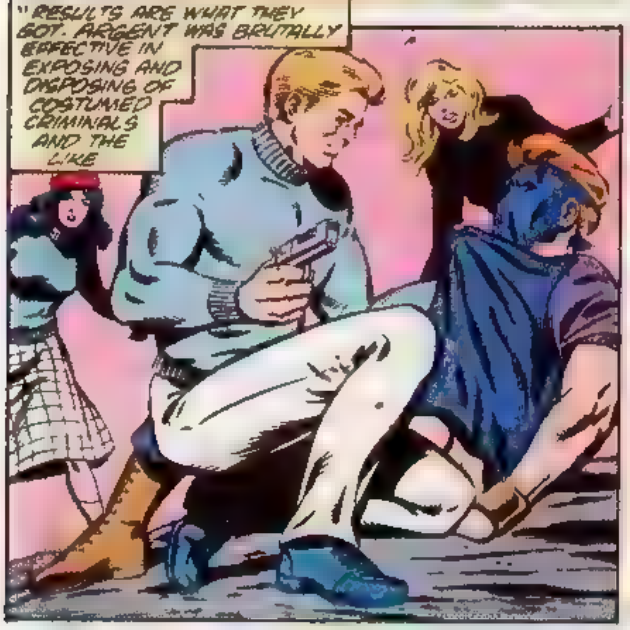
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

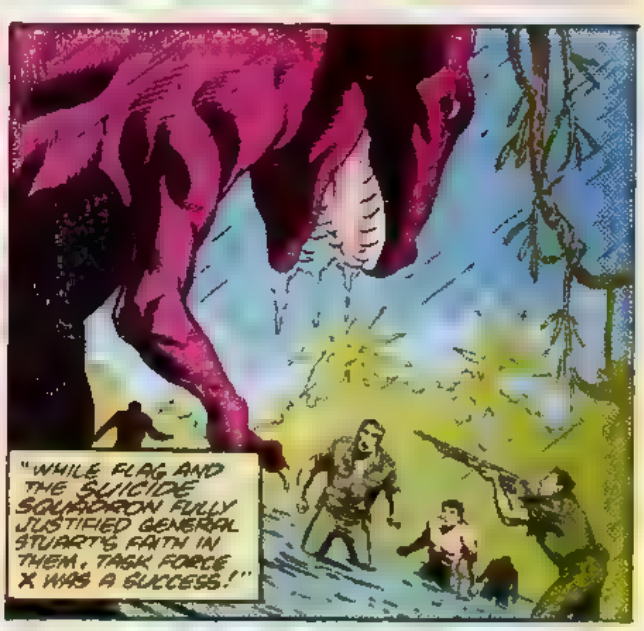


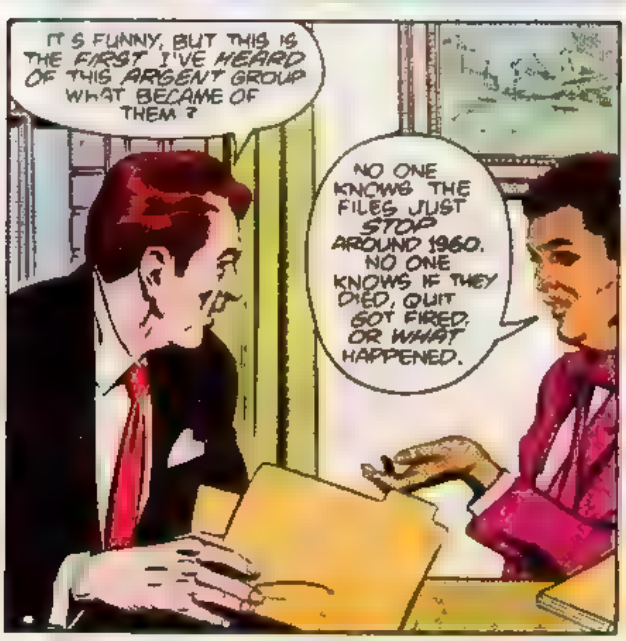
*Indicates Trademark of DC Comics Inc. Copyright © 1986


I, TOO, WOULD LIKE TO CHOOSE MY OWN PEOPLE. AND AUTHORITY TO USE THEM AS I SEE FIT
THAT'S FINE WHAT I WANT ARE RESULTS ARE YOU GAME?

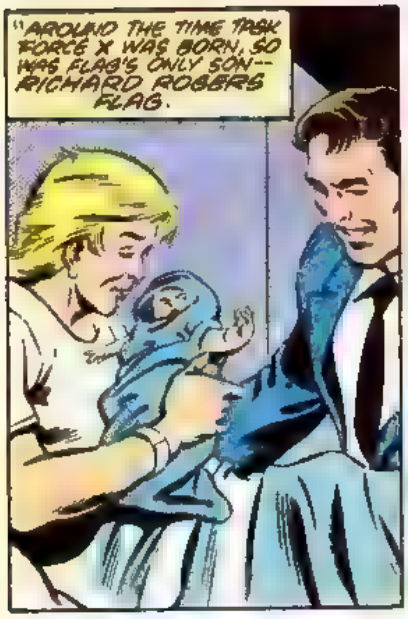
YES, SIR
WELL, THAT'S FINE! WE HAVE NOW LAUNCHED TASK FORCE X!

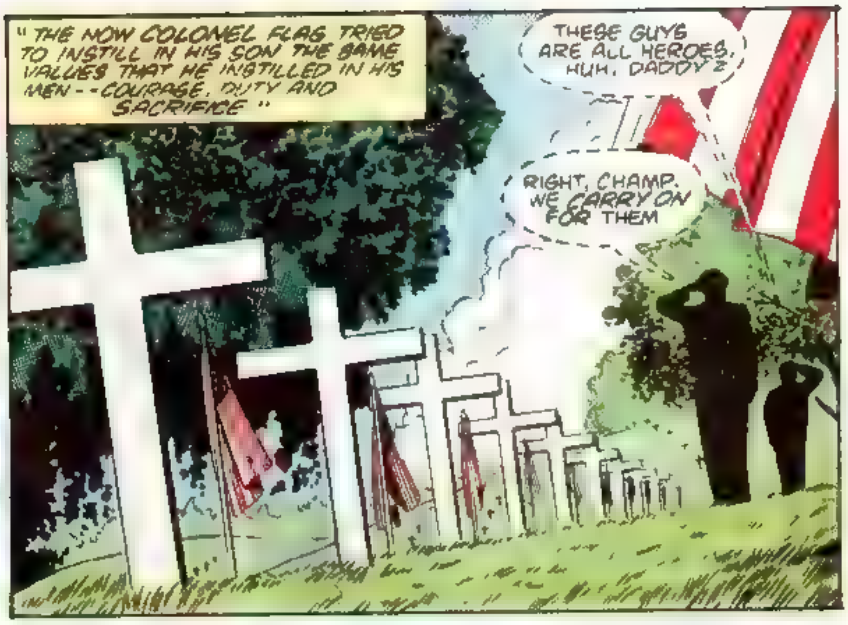

"RESULTS ARE WHAT THEY GOT. ARGENT WAS BRUTALLY EFFECTIVE IN EXPOSING AND DISPOSING OF COSTUMED CRIMINALS AND THE LIKE

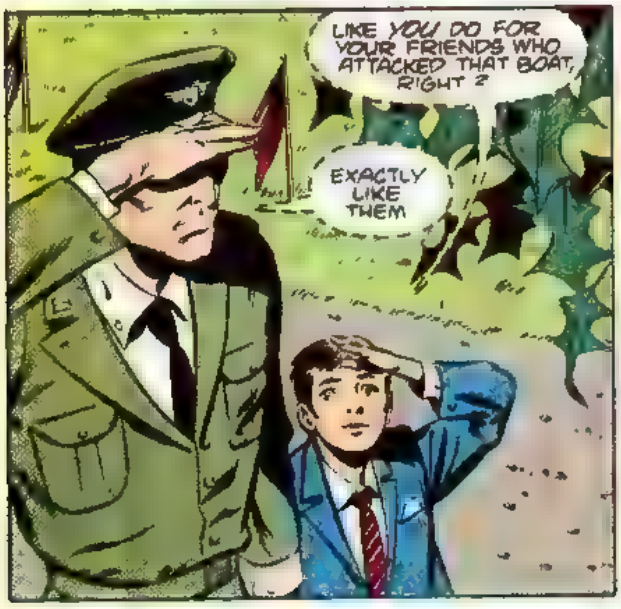

"WHILE FLAG AND THE SUICIDE SQUADRON FULLY JUSTIFIED GENERAL STUART'S FAITH IN THEM, TASK FORCE X WAS A SUCCESS!"


IT'S FUNNY, BUT THIS IS THE FIRST I'VE HEARD OF THIS ARGENT GROUP WHAT BECAME OF THEM?
NO ONE KNOWS THE FILES JUST STOP AROUND 1960. NO ONE KNOWS IF THEY DIED, QUIT GOT FIRED, OR WHAT HAPPENED.

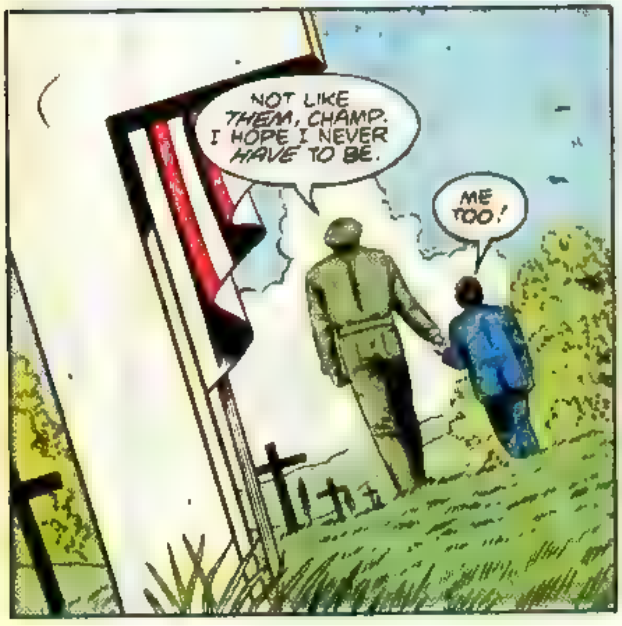
FOR ALL ANYBODY KNOWS, THEY COULD STILL BE OUT THERE, SO COVERT NO ONE KNOWS THEY'RE ALIVE
IS THAT POSSIBLE?
POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY, SIR.


"AROUND THE TIME TASK FORCE X WAS BORN, SO WAS FLAG'S ONLY SON--RICHARD ROGERS FLAG.

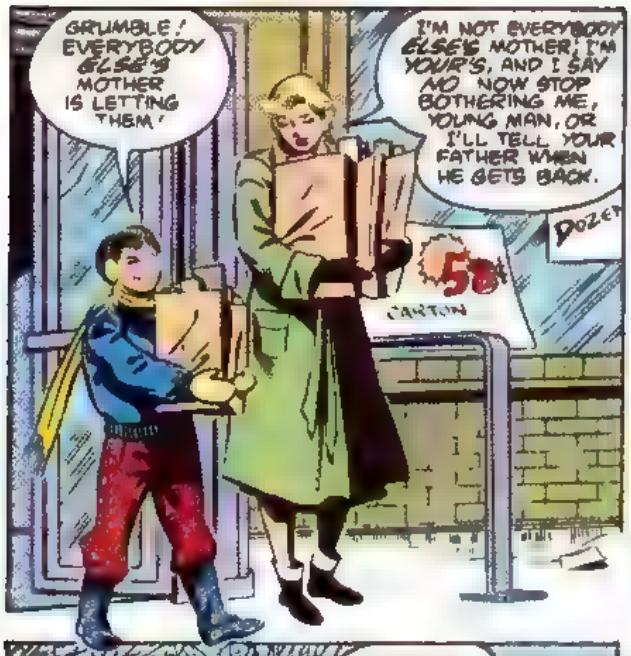

"THE NOW COLONEL FLAG TRIED TO INSTILL IN HIS SON THE SAME VALUES THAT HE INSTILLED IN HIS MEN--COURAGE, DUTY AND SACRIFICE."
THESE GUYS ARE ALL HEROES, HUH, DADDY?
RIGHT, CHAMP. WE CARRY ON FOR THEM

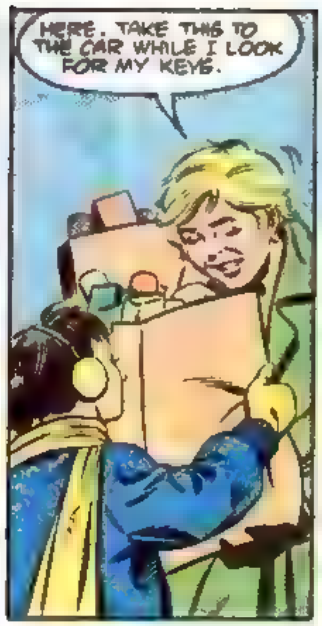

LIKE YOU DO FOR YOUR FRIENDS WHO ATTACKED THAT BOAT, RIGHT?
EXACTLY LIKE THEM

YOU'RE A HERO, TOO, HUH, DADDY?


NOT LIKE THEM, CHAMP. I HOPE I NEVER HAVE TO BE.
ME TOO!

IT WASN'T UNTIL HE WAS EIGHT YEARS OLD THAT YOUNG RICK FLAG REALLY UNDERSTOOD WHAT SACRIFICE MEANT."
SUPER MART

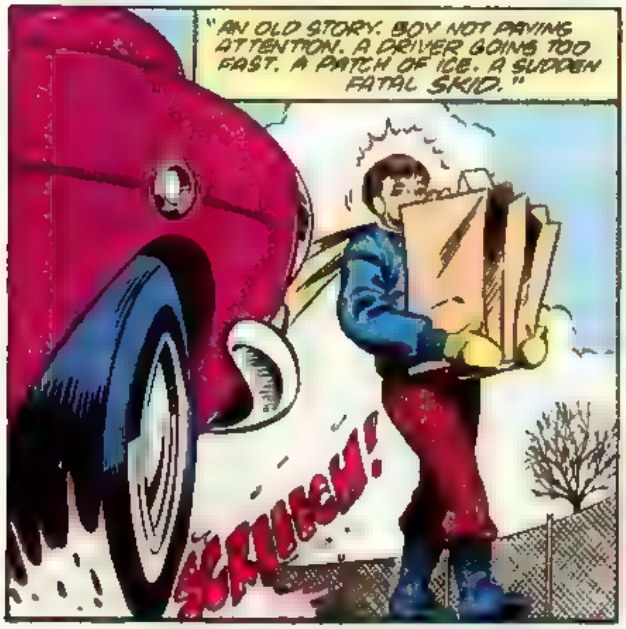

GRUMBLE! EVERYBODY ELSE'S MOTHER IS LETTING THEM!
I'M NOT EVERYBODY ELSE'S MOTHER; I'M YOUR'S, AND I SAY NO. NOW STOP BOTHERING ME, YOUNG MAN, OR I'LL TELL YOUR FATHER WHEN HE GETS BACK.
DOZEN
58¢
CARTON


HERE. TAKE THIS TO THE CAR WHILE I LOOK FOR MY KEYS.

ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN HANDLE ALL THAT, RICKY?
C'MON, MOM! I'M NOT A BABY!

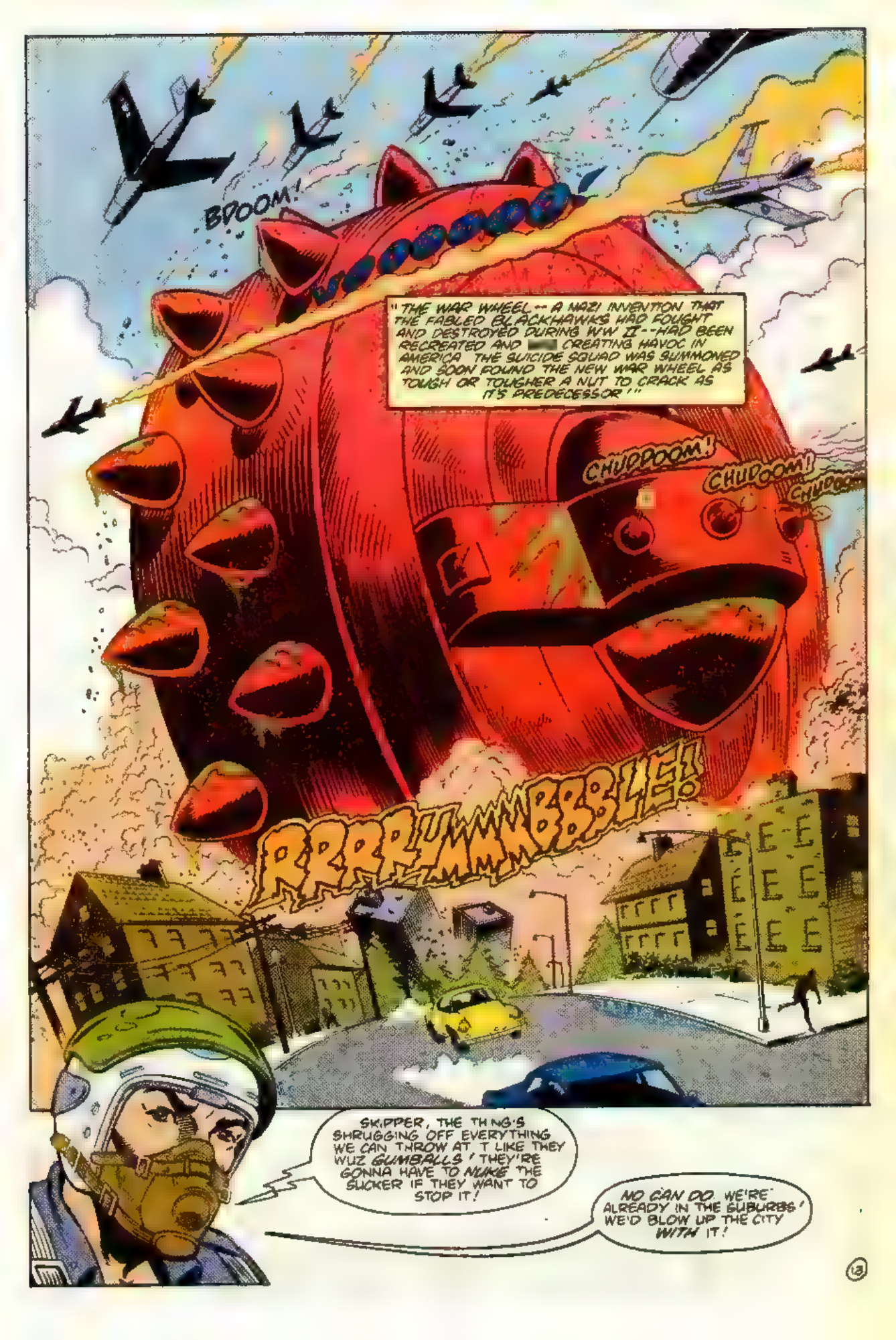
WELL, BE CAREFUL!
NOW, WHERE DID I PUT THOSE KEYS?... LIPSTICK... STAMPS...

SHERMIE'S MOTHER IS LETTING HIM GO. I NEVER GET TO DO ANYTHING! DAD WOULD LET ME...

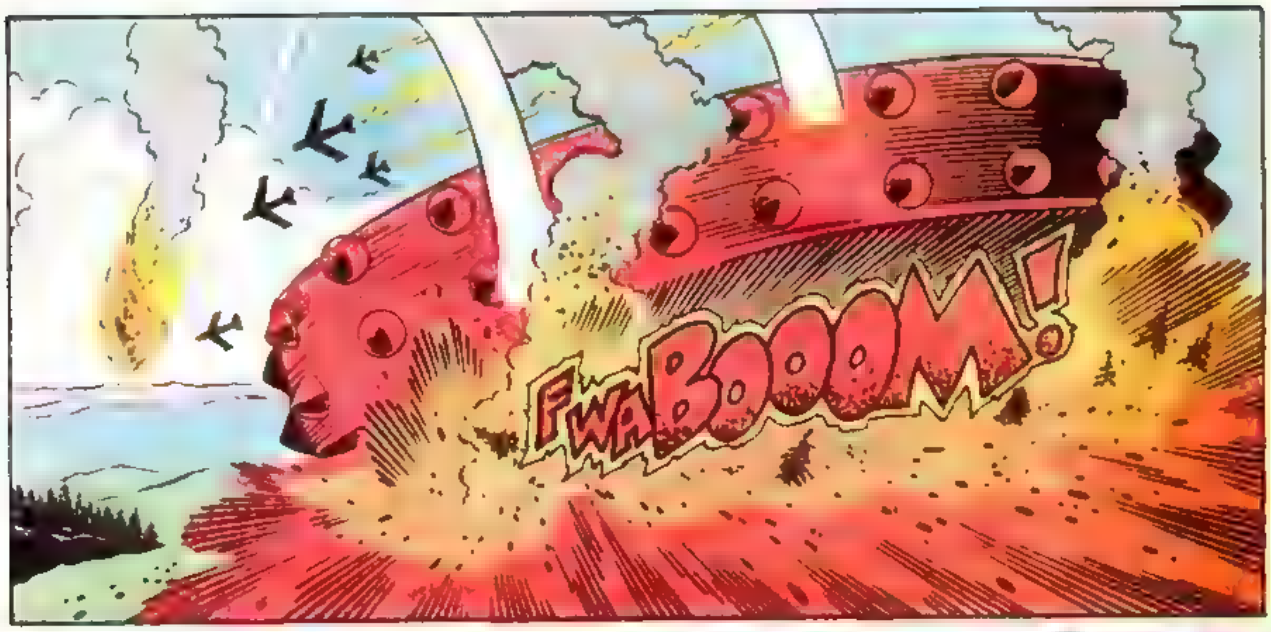

"AN OLD STORY. BOY NOT PAYING ATTENTION. A DRIVER GOING TOO FAST. A PATCH OF ICE. A SUDDEN FATAL SKID."
SCREEECH!

RICKY! GET OUT OF THE WAY!
MILK

SCREEEEEEEEEEEEEE
AAAH!
MOM!
...MOM...!
MOM... WAS A HERO, WASN'T SHE DAD?
YEAH A HERO. SON
"SOMETHING BROKE INSIDE RICHARD MONTGOMERY FLAG WHEN HIS WIFE DIED. THEY SAY HE WAS NEVER THE SAME AFTERWARDS. HAD SHE NOT DIED, WOULD HE HAVE STILL TAKEN THE SAME STEPS HE TOOK TWO YEARS LATER?"
12


BDOOM!
"THE WAR WHEEL -- A NAZI INVENTION THAT THE FABLED BLACKHAWKS HAD FOUGHT AND DESTROYED DURING WW II--HAD BEEN RECREATED AND [redacted] CREATING HAVOC IN AMERICA. THE SUICIDE SQUAD WAS SUMMONED AND SOON FOUND THE NEW WAR WHEEL AS TOUGH OR TOUGHER A NUT TO CRACK AS IT'S PREDECESSOR!"
CHUDDOOM!
CHUDOOM!
CHUDOOM
RRRRUMMMBBBLEE!
SKIPPER, THE THING'S SHRUGGING OFF EVERYTHING WE CAN THROW AT T. LIKE THEY WUZ GUMBALLS! THEY'RE GONNA HAVE TO NUKE THE SUCKER IF THEY WANT TO STOP IT!
NO CAN DO. WE'RE ALREADY IN THE SUBURBS! WE'D BLOW UP THE CITY WITH IT!

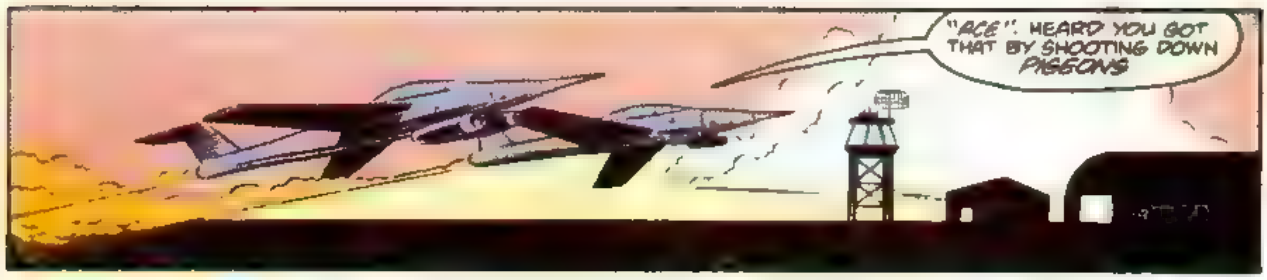
GOTTA DO SOMETHIN' PDQ *, BOSS. WE'RE OUTTA AMMO AND RUNNIN' OUTTA TIME!
* PRETTY DARN QUICK-- LINGUIST BOB
"...CARRY ON... FOR US..."
STAND OFF, BOYS! WE'VE STILL GOT ONE SHOT!
SWOOOSH!
SKIP! WHAT ARE YA DOIN'?!
JUST... TELL MY SON... TO CARRY ON...
...FORMMMEEEK!
SWOOSH!
SKIP!
14


FWA-BOOOM!

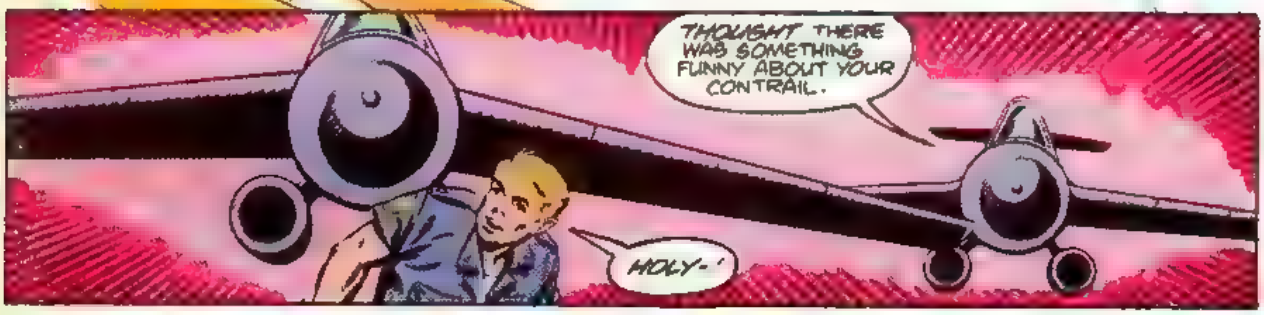
I'LL REMEMBER, DAD. I'LL CARRY ON.

"YOUNG RICK FLAG WENT TO LIVE WITH HIS GODFATHER GENERAL J.E.B. STUART. NO REAL SURPRISE, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED THAT HE WENT INTO THE MILITARY WHEN HE GOT OLD ENOUGH.
"AFTER GRADUATING NEAR THE TOP OF HIS CLASS, FLAG WENT TO FLIGHT SCHOOL AND EVENTUALLY BECAME A TOP-RATED TEST PILOT.

"HIS ONLY REAL COMPETITION WAS A GUY NAMED ACE MORGAN AND BETWEEN THEM THERE RAN A SLIGHTLY LESS THAN FRIENDLY RIVALRY."
HEY HOTSHOT, TIME WE SETTLED THIS ONCE AND FOR ALL. WHAT SAY TO A LITTLE FRIENDLY DOGFIGHT, MANO-A-MANO, RIGHT NOW?
BRING YOUR TOOL. I'M GONNA WAX T


"ACE". HEARD YOU GOT THAT BY SHOOTING DOWN PIGEONS

YOU SHOULD KNOW. YOU FLY LIKE ONE. LET'S SEE IF I CAN PLUCK YOU LIKE A SKYRAT
DON'T MAKE ME NERVOUS, MORGAN. I'LL PAINT MY COCKPIT BROWN!


THOUGHT THERE WAS SOMETHING FUNNY ABOUT YOUR CONTRAIL.
HOLY-!

MORGAN! FLAG! THE C.O. WANTS YOUR BUTTS IN HIS OFFICE NOW!
SOUNDS LIKE WE DONE GOT INVITED TO A BARBEQUE

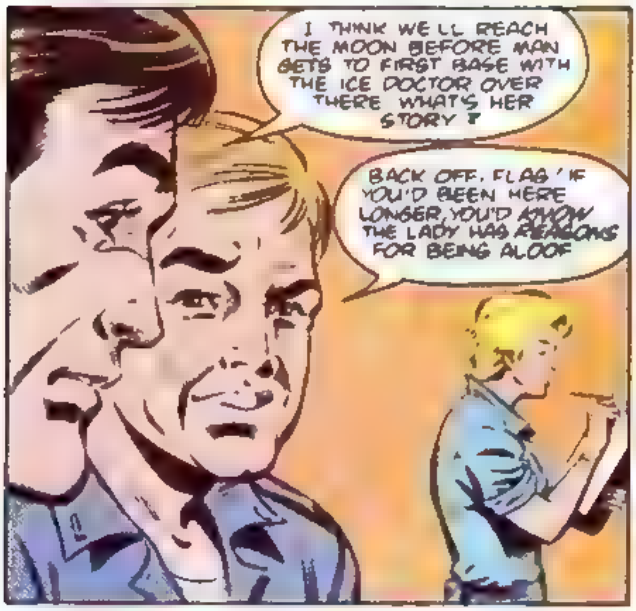
WHAT THE HELL YOU TWO JUVENILE DELINQUENTS THINK YER DOIN'? THAT'S UNCLE SAMMIE'S VERY EXPENSIVE HARDWARE YER PLAYIN' WITH! NOT HOT RODS!

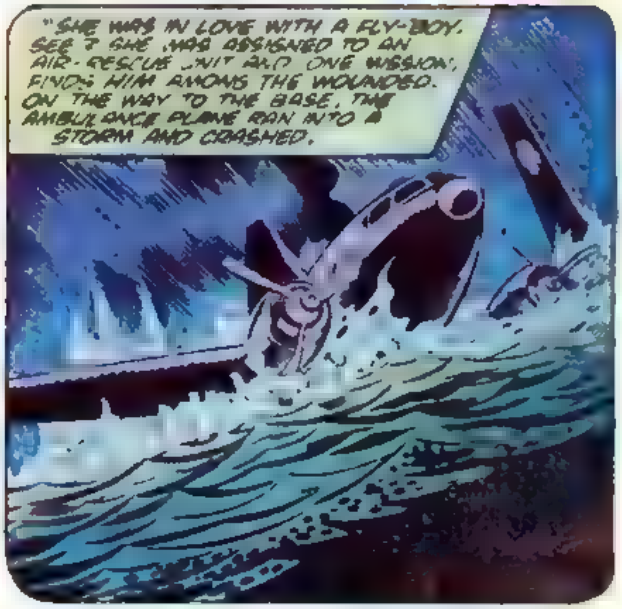
PAIR OF HOT DOGS...
LAB SAYS MOVIES WERE INCONCLUSIVE REMATCH?
ANY TIME, ANY PLACE.

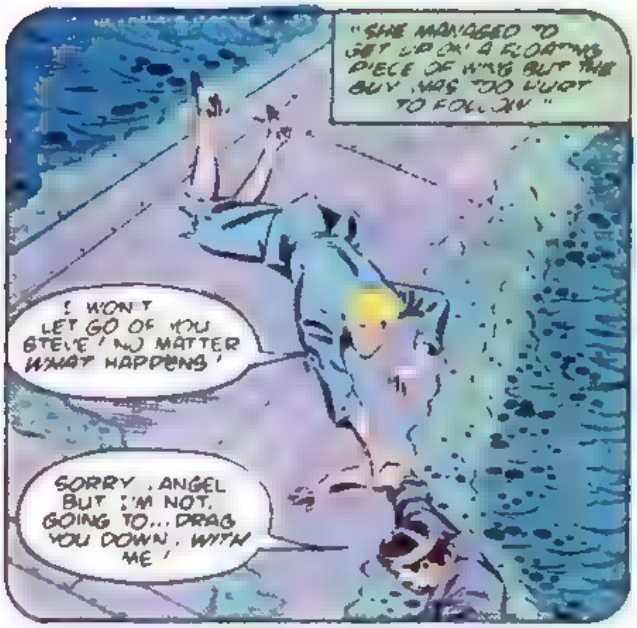
"THE PAIR GOT GROUNDED, DELAYING THE REMATCH. AND BEFORE IT WAS LIFTED, FLAG GOT AN OFFICIAL LETTER."
IT'S ABOUT MY APPLICATION TO ASTRONAUT TRAINING

I'M IN!

"IT WAS DURING THAT TRAINING HE FIRST MET KARIN GRACE, A YOUNG DOCTOR SPECIALIZING IN THE NEW FIELD OF SPACE MEDICINE. THE FIRST MEETING DIDN'T SET THE WORLD ON FIRE."

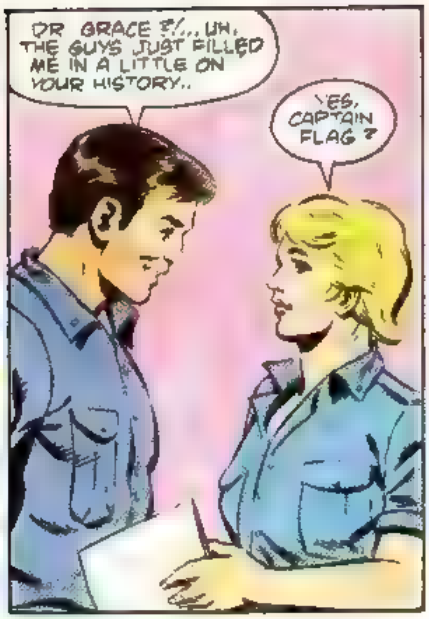

I THINK WE'LL REACH THE MOON BEFORE MAN GETS TO FIRST BASE WITH THE ICE DOCTOR OVER THERE. WHAT'S HER STORY?
BACK OFF, FLAG! IF YOU'D BEEN HERE LONGER, YOU'D KNOW THE LADY HAS REASONS FOR BEING ALOOF


"SHE WAS IN LOVE WITH A FLY-BOY. SEE? SHE WAS ASSIGNED TO AN AIR-RESCUE UNIT AND ONE MISSION, FINDS HIM AMONG THE WOUNDED. ON THE WAY TO THE BASE, THE AMBULANCE PLANE RAN INTO A STORM AND CRASHED.

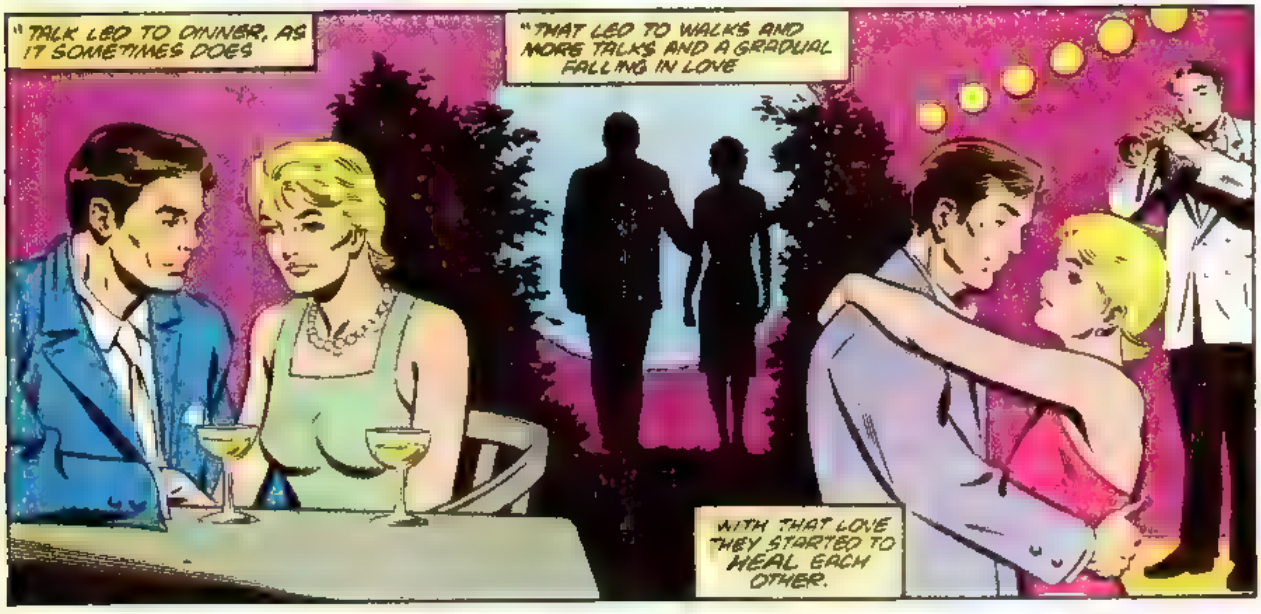

"SHE MANAGED TO GET UP ON A FLOATING PIECE OF WING BUT THE GUY WAS TOO HURT TO FOLLOW."
I WON'T LET GO OF YOU STEVE! NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS!
SORRY, ANGEL BUT I'M NOT GOING TO... DRAG YOU DOWN, WITH ME!

STEVE! DON'T PUSH MY HAND AWAY!
IT'S THE ONLY WAY
CARRY ON, FOR ME.

I WON'T FORGET. I'LL NEVER FORGET...
THAT'S WHY SHE IS AS SHE IS, FLAG. SHE'S PULLING DUTY FOR TWO."

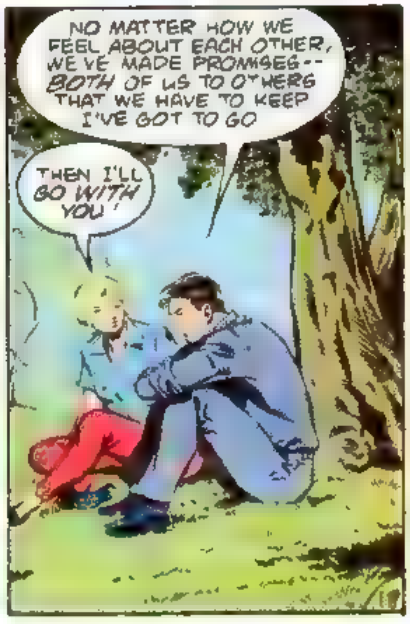

DR. GRACE?/... UH, THE GUYS JUST FILLED ME IN A LITTLE ON YOUR HISTORY..
YES, CAPTAIN FLAG?

I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THAT. YOU SEE I'VE GONE THROUGH SOMETHING SIMILAR AND I'VE NEVER HAD THE CHANCE TO TALK ABOUT IT.
I'D BE GLAD TO


"TALK LED TO DINNER, AS IT SOMETIMES DOES
"THAT LED TO WALKS AND MORE TALKS AND A GRADUAL FALLING IN LOVE
WITH THAT LOVE THEY STARTED TO HEAL EACH OTHER.

"ANOTHER TELEGRAM CHANGED ALL THAT."
IT'S FROM MY UNCLE JEB. THE SUICIDE SQUAD IS BEING REACTIVATED.

HE WANTS ME TO TAKE MY DAD'S PLACE.
BUT RICK, WHAT ABOUT YOUR OWN DREAMS? WHAT ABOUT US?


NO MATTER HOW WE FEEL ABOUT EACH OTHER, WE'VE MADE PROMISES -- BOTH OF US TO OTHERS THAT WE HAVE TO KEEP. I'VE GOT TO GO.
THEN I'LL GO WITH YOU!

"WITH ARGENT NOW OUT OF THE PICTURE, THE TWO BRANCHES OF TASK FORCE X WERE COMBINED INTO ONE, REDUBBED MISSION X

GENERAL STUART PULLED THE RIGHT STRINGS AND KARIN GRACE WAS ALLOWED TO JOIN THE TEAM, WHICH WAS COMPLETED BY TWO CIVILIAN SCIENTISTS -- PHYSICIST JESS BRIGHT AND ASTRONOMER DR HUGH EVANS

"IN AN EFFORT TO MAINTAIN FUNDING, MISSION X WENT PUBLIC WITH THEIR EXPLOITS AND THE SQUAD'S SUCCESSES AGAINST DINOSAURS, MONSTERS, ALIENS, ORGANIZED CRIME, YOU NAME IT -- WERE TO INFLUENCE MORE THAN ONE FANTASTIC FOURSOME.

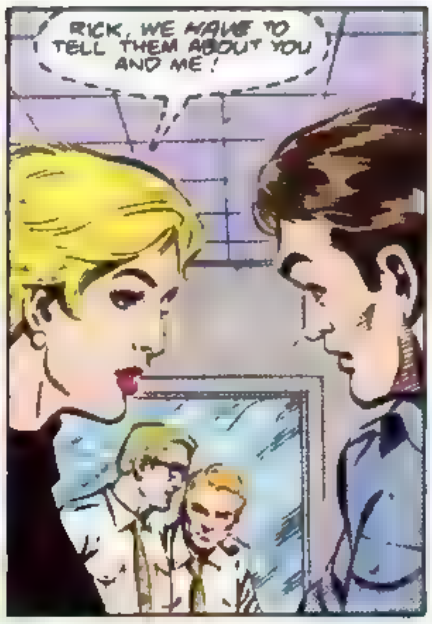
NEW YORK TIMES
SUICIDE SQUAD FOILS MONSTER

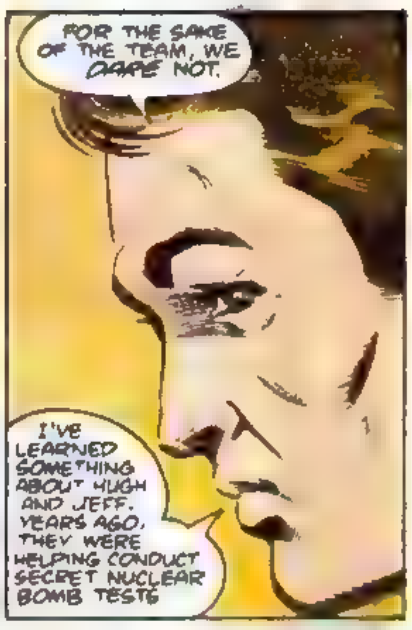
THE DAILY NEWS
SECRET SQUAD
DINOSAUR ELIMINATED

SQUAD ON TOP

SUICIDE SQUAD

"BUT ALL WAS NOT EASY WITHIN THE SQUAD. BOTH BRIGHT AND EVANS HAD FALLEN IN LOVE WITH KARIN."


RICK, WE HAVE TO TELL THEM ABOUT YOU AND ME!

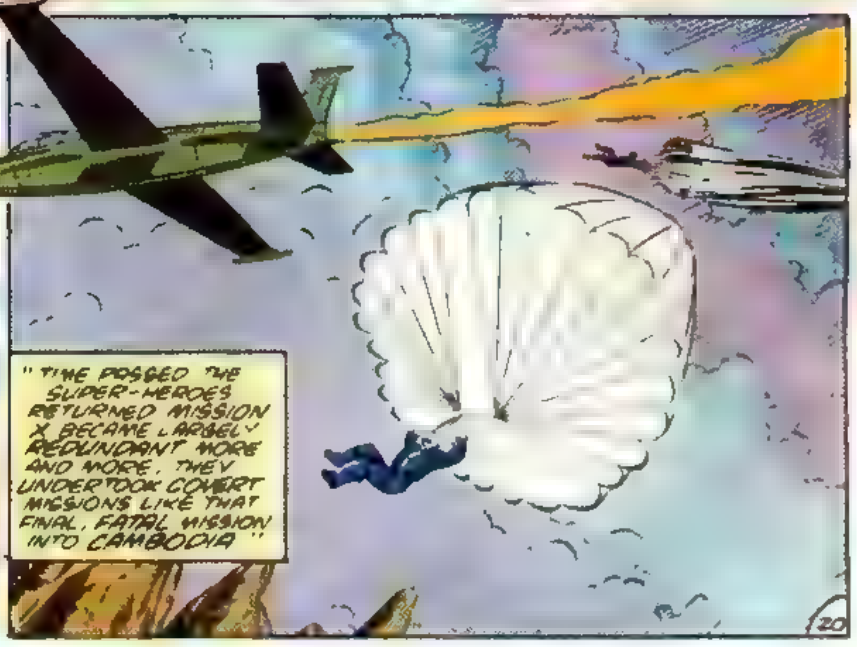

FOR THE SAKE OF THE TEAM, WE DARE NOT.
I'VE LEARNED SOMETHING ABOUT HUGH AND JEFF. YEARS AGO, THEY WERE HELPING CONDUCT SECRET NUCLEAR BOMB TESTS

"THEIR JEEP BROKE DOWN ON THE WAY TO THE OBSERVATION STATION. THE BOMB WAS ACCIDENTALLY TRIGGERED EARLY."
THE OTHERS ARE TRAPPED IN THERE!
IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR THE JEEP, WE'D BE THERE TOO!

"THE RADIATION WAS HORRIBLY HIGH, BUT EVANS AND BRIGHT TRIED TO GET THEIR FRIENDS OUT."
COME... NO CLOSER! WE'VE ALL... HAD IT! CARRY ON... FOR US!

WE WILL...
WE WILL

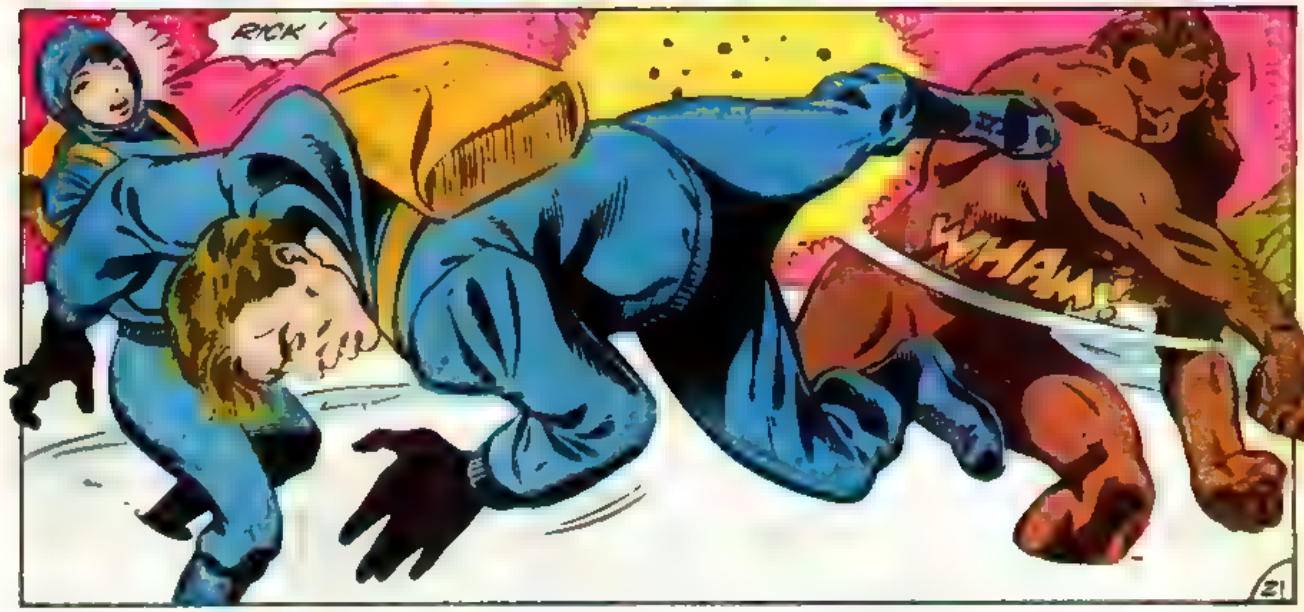
THEIR PSYCH PROFILES INDICATE THEY STILL AREN'T OVER THE TRAUMA. HQ IS WORRIED WHAT ANOTHER REJECTION MIGHT DO TO THEM.
FOR THE GOOD OF THE TEAM, THEY MUST NEVER KNOW ABOUT OUR LOVE!

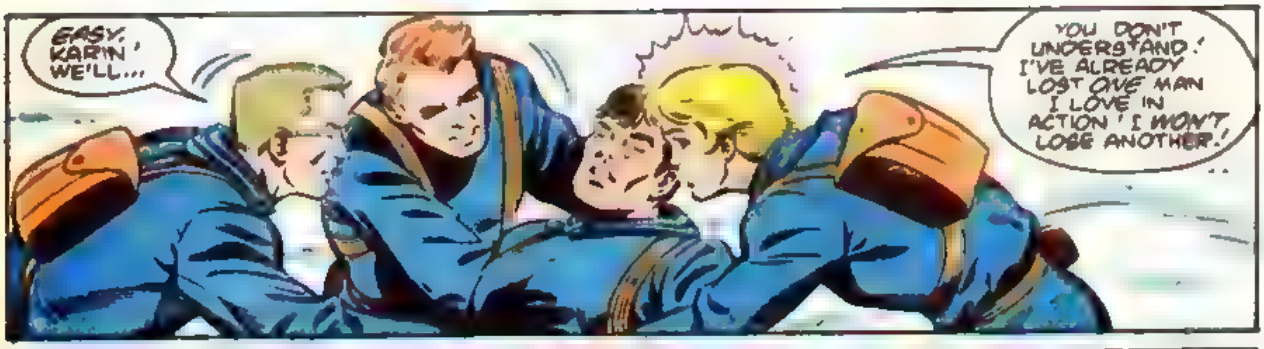

"TIME PASSED. THE SUPER-HEROES RETURNED. MISSION X BECAME LARGELY REDUNDANT. MORE AND MORE, THEY UNDERTOOK COVERT MISSIONS LIKE THAT FINAL, FATAL MISSION INTO CAMBODIA."

"OR MAYBE THE ODDS JUST FINALLY CAUGHT UP WITH THEM

"TRUST THE SUICIDE SQUAD TO FIND OUT THE TRUTH ABOUT THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMAN THE HARD WAY!"
GRRRRAWHHRRR!
YETI!!!
KARIN, GET BACK!

EVANS! BRIGHT! GET KARIN TO SAFETY WHILE I ...!


RICK!
WHAM!


EASY, KARIN! WE'LL...
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! I'VE ALREADY LOST ONE MAN I LOVE IN ACTION! I WON'T LOSE ANOTHER!

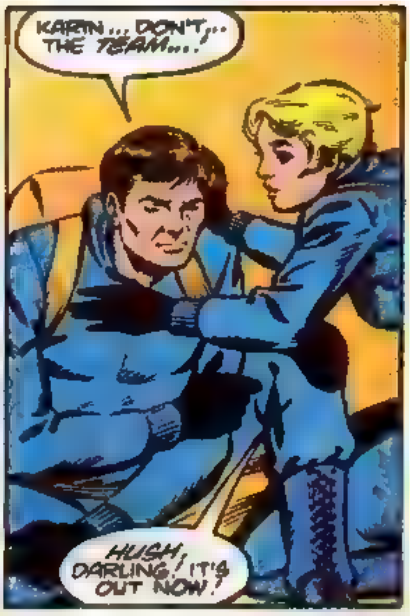
YOU LOVE...?!
KKKKRAAAAKKK!

"THEY'D BEEN STANDING ON A SNOW BRIDGE OVER A CREVASSE AND, PERHAPS FORTUNATELY, IT CHOSE THAT MOMENT TO GIVE WAY
RIIICK!
GRRRAAAAAKK!

"THE ODDS WERE WITH THEM ONE MORE TIME AND THEY MANAGED TO SURVIVE THE FALL, ONLY TO FIND THEMSELVES IN A HUGE ICE CAVERN WITH AN IMMENSE GOLDEN TEMPLE!!!"
* AS SEEN IN ACTION #552-80B

"KARIN'S CONCERN FOR RICK HAD NOT GONE UNREMARKED OR MISUNDERSTOOD."

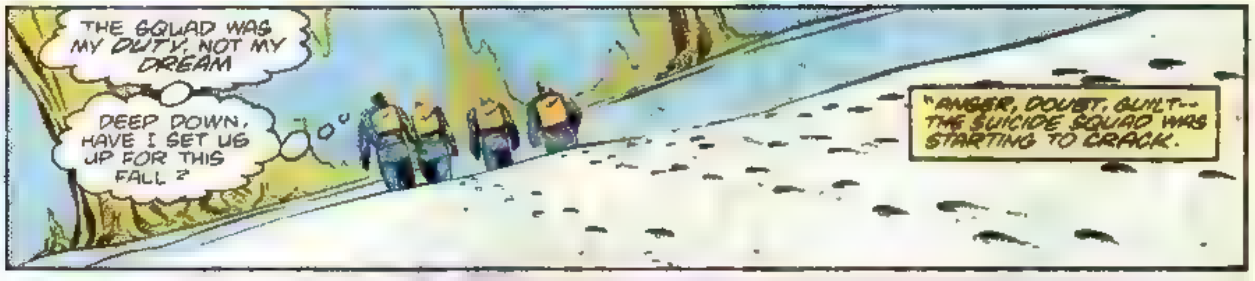
YOU AND FLAG-- THIS HAS BEEN GOING ON SINCE WE BEGAN, HASN'T IT, KARIN?
OH, PLEASE, JEFF! NOT NOW!

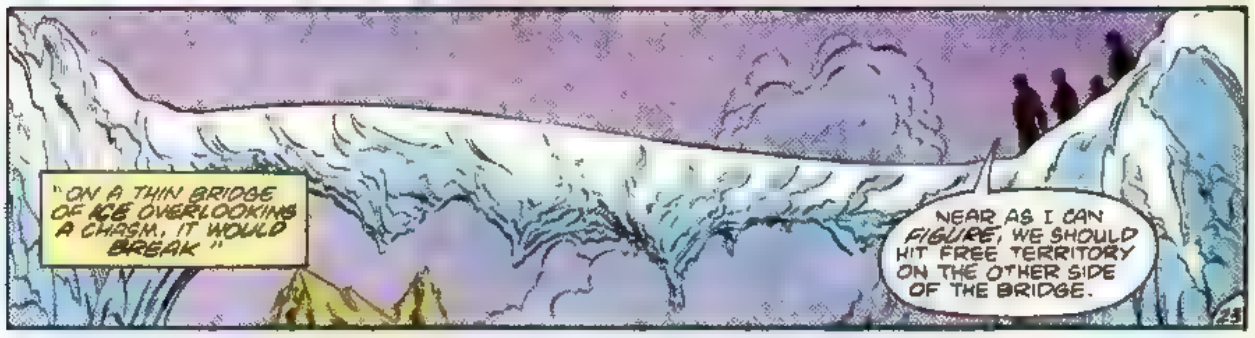

KARIN... DON'T,... THE TEAM...!
HUSH, DARLING! IT'S OUT NOW!

WHY COULDN'T YOU JUST TELL US?
RICK... WE FELT IT WAS BETTER THIS WAY! FOR THE SAKE OF THE TEAM! HUGH, I'M SORRY!

HONESTY WOULD'VE BEEN BEST FOR THE TEAM. NOT PLAYING US FOR FOOLS!
YOU CAN TAKE THE TEAM AND SHOVE IT! WHEN WE GET BACK, I'M THROUGH!

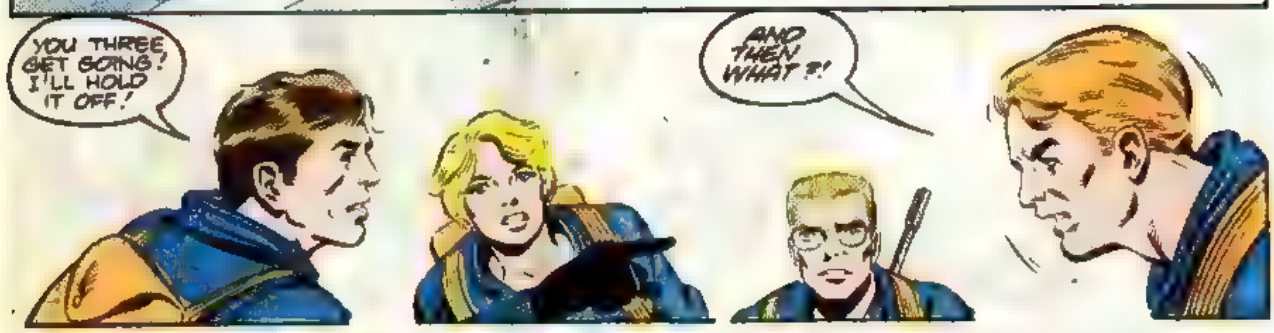
IT'S HAPPENING JUST LIKE I FEARED. OR IS IT, DEEP DOWN, THE WAY THAT I ALWAYS WANTED?!


THE SQUAD WAS MY DUTY, NOT MY DREAM
DEEP DOWN, HAVE I SET US UP FOR THIS FALL?
"ANGER, DOUBT, GUILT-- THE SUICIDE SQUAD WAS STARTING TO CRACK.


"ON A THIN BRIDGE OF ICE OVERLOOKING A CHASM, IT WOULD BREAK."
NEAR AS I CAN FIGURE, WE SHOULD HIT FREE TERRITORY ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BRIDGE.

PROBLEM IS-- WE DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH WEIGHT IT'LL STAND!
HAVE TO MOVE SINGLY. TAKE OUR TIME. I'LL GO FIRST
ALWAYS THE HERO.

RRRRAHHHRR!
THE YETI!
IT MUST HAVE PICKED UP OUR TRAIL AFTER WE LEFT THE TEMPLE!


YOU THREE GET GOING! I'LL HOLD IT OFF!
AND THEN WHAT?!

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS THE SKILLS TO GET US BACK TO CIVILIZATION! YOU DIE HERE AND WE ALL DIE HERE!
JEFF AND I WILL HOLD IT OFF! GET KARIN ACROSS! FOR THE GOOD OF THE TEAM!

I... ALL RIGHT! YOU'RE RIGHT! KARIN, LET'S GO!
NO!
NO MORE SACRIFICES FOR ME!

I'M SORRY, KARIN!
KRAK!
BUT THEIR ONLY CHANCE HINGES ON HOW QUICKLY WE CAN GET ACROSS!
MOVE IT, FLAG! I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG WE CAN KEEP THIS BEAST AT BAY!
POW!
POW!
THAT SOUND!
KKKRRRAAAKKK!
OUR WEIGHT TOGETHER IS TOO MUCH FOR THE ICE!
KKK RRR UMMBBLLE!
GOT TO JUMP FOR IT!

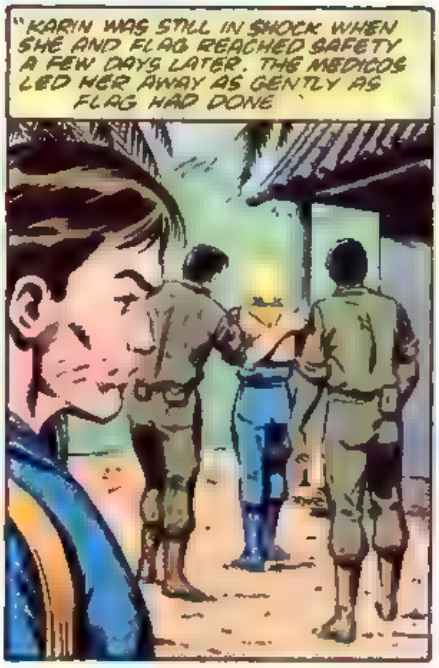
UHN! JUST... MADE IT!
OHHHH! RIIICK...? WHAT...?

GRRRAHHR!
POW!
POW!

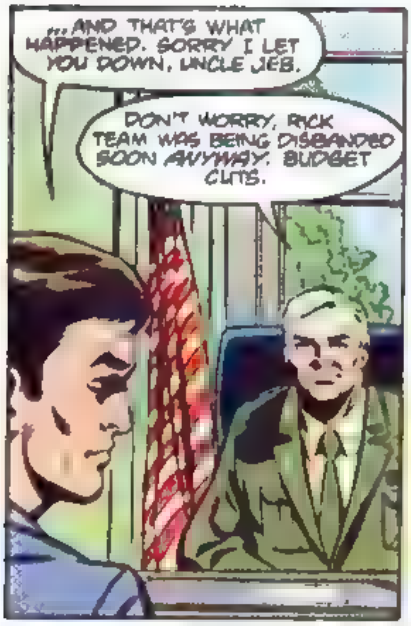
"DYING, THE BEAST FELL ON THE TWO SCIENTISTS AND ALL THREE TUMBLED INTO THE ABYSS!"
YIIIIII!

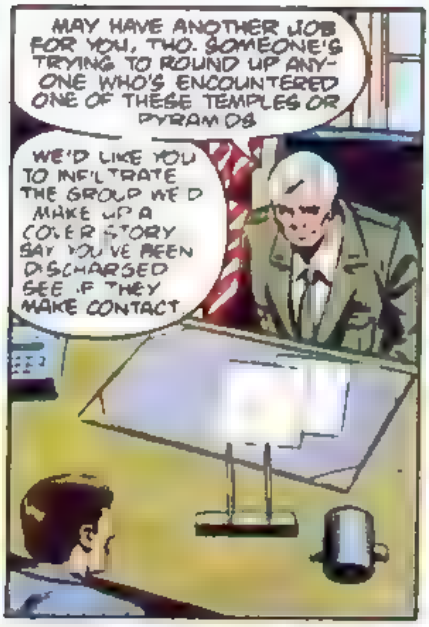
NOOOO!

... THE DEPTHS... HE... THEY... FELL... TOOK THEIR HAND AWAY... FOR ME... CARRY ON... CARRY ON...

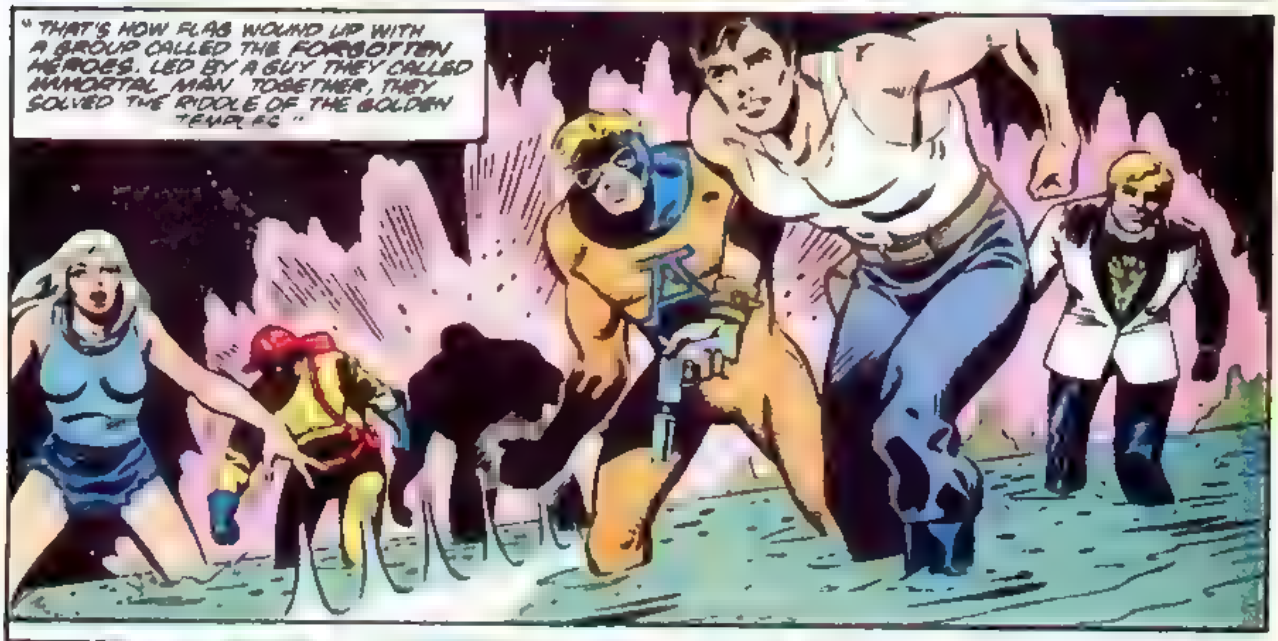

"KARIN WAS STILL IN SHOCK WHEN SHE AND FLAG REACHED SAFETY A FEW DAYS LATER. THE MEDICOS LED HER AWAY AS GENTLY AS FLAG HAD DONE.

SOMETHING BROKE INSIDE RICK FLAG THAT DAY."


...AND THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED. SORRY I LET YOU DOWN, UNCLE JEB.
DON'T WORRY, RICK TEAM WAS BEING DISBANDED SOON ANYWAY. BUDGET CUTS.

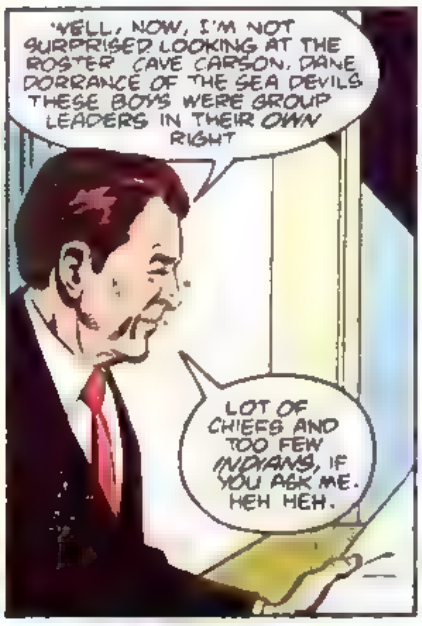

MAY HAVE ANOTHER JOB FOR YOU, TWO. SOMEONE'S TRYING TO ROUND UP ANYONE WHO'S ENCOUNTERED ONE OF THESE TEMPLES OR PYRAMIDS
WE'D LIKE YOU TO INFILTRATE THE GROUP WE'D MAKE UP A COVER STORY SAY YOU'VE BEEN DISCHARGED SEE IF THEY MAKE CONTACT

NASTY WORK BUT NECESSARY
IT SUITS ME, SIR I'LL TAKE IT


"THAT'S HOW FLAG WOUND UP WITH A GROUP CALLED THE FORGOTTEN HEROES. LED BY A GUY THEY CALLED IMMORTAL MAN. TOGETHER, THEY SOLVED THE RIDDLE OF THE GOLDEN TEMPLE."

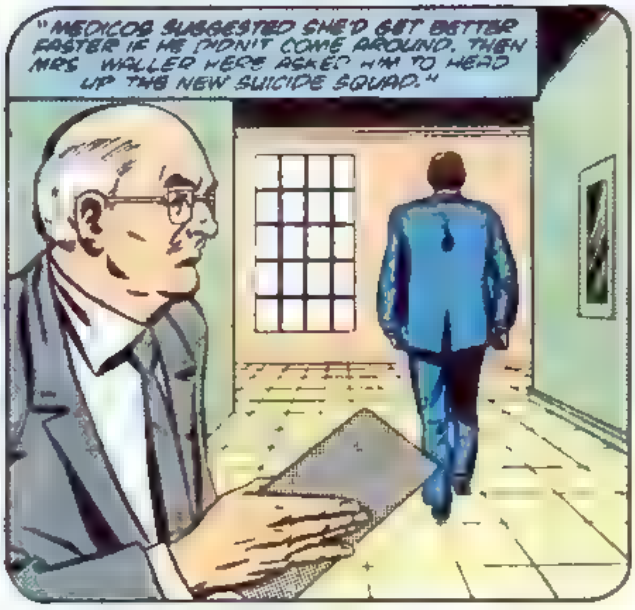
SAYS HERE HE STAYED ON WITH THESE HEROES AFTERWARDS
AT THE GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST AND IRONICALLY THE GROUP'S ALTHOUGH HE PERFORMED HIS MISSION CAPABLY, HIS HEART WASN'T MUCH IN IT

IMMORTAL MAN DIED FIGHTING THAT WORLD-WIDE CRISIS LAST YEAR. WITHOUT HIM, THE FORGOTTEN HEROES SPLIT UP


WELL, NOW, I'M NOT SURPRISED. LOOKING AT THE ROSTER. CAVE CARSON, DANE DORRANCE OF THE SEA DEVILS. THESE BOYS WERE GROUP LEADERS IN THEIR OWN RIGHT
LOT OF CHIEFS AND TOO FEW INDIANS, IF YOU ASK ME. HEH HEH.

WHAT BECAME OF FLAG THEN?
KNOCKED AROUND ON A FEW HUSH-HUSH MISSIONS. TOO OLD NOW TO GO BACK TO ASTRONAUT SCHOOL, ESPECIALLY WITH THE SHAPE THE SPACE PROGRAM'S IN THESE DAYS

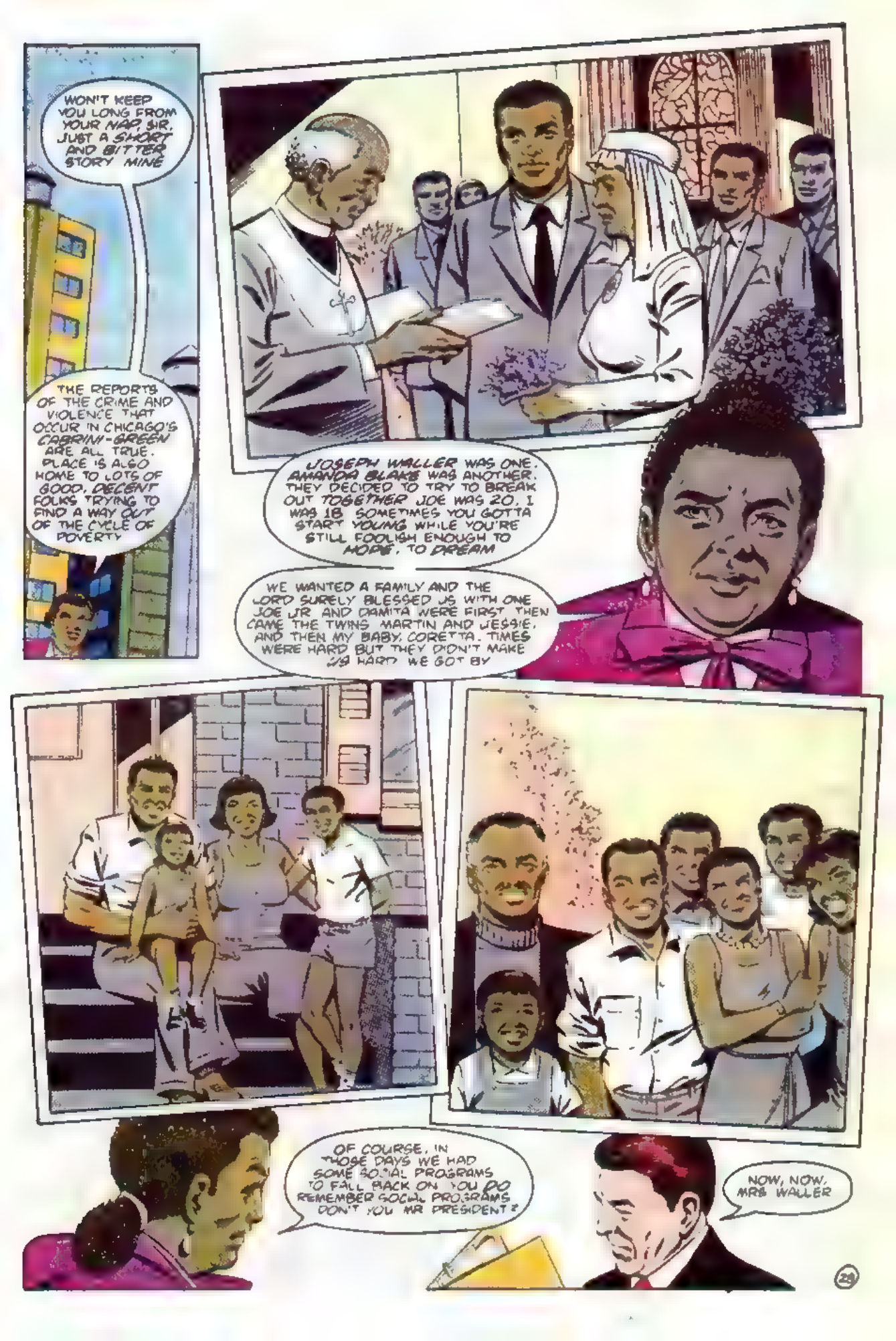
"HE LOOKED IN ON THE GRACE GIRL BUT SHE WAS STILL LARGELY OUT OF IT."

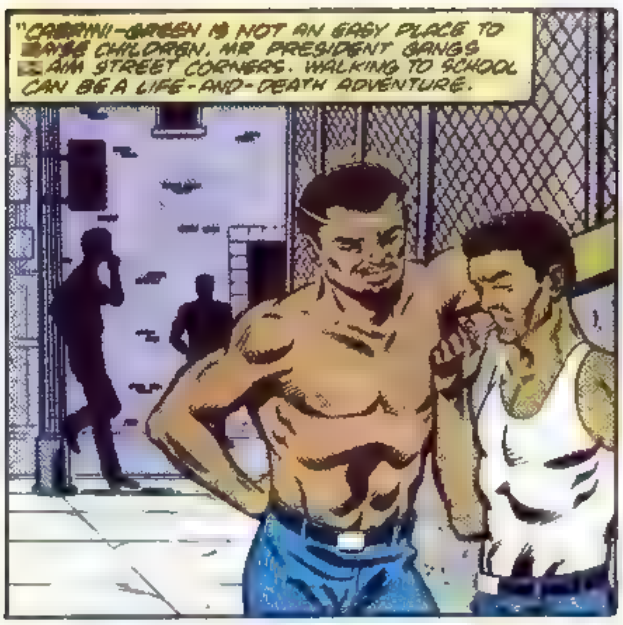

"MEDICOS SUGGESTED SHE'D GET BETTER FASTER IF HE DIDN'T COME AROUND. THEN MRS. WALLER HERE ASKED HIM TO HEAD UP THE NEW SUICIDE SQUAD."

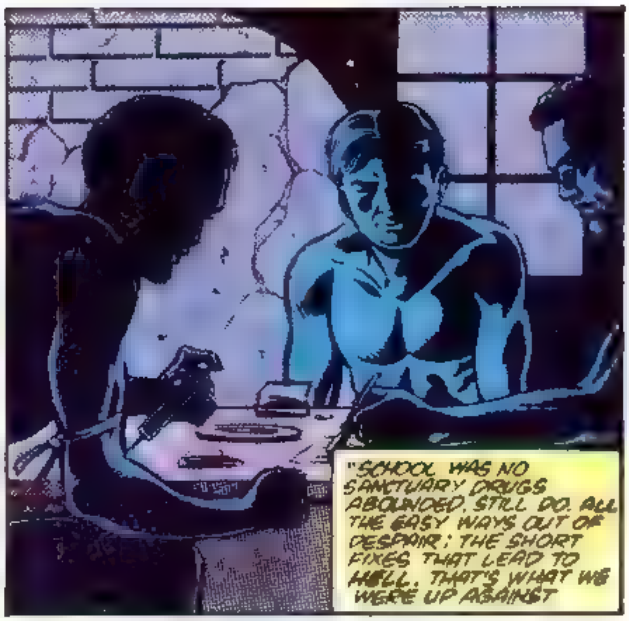
NOW, IF MEMORY SERVES ME, MRS. WALLER, YOU HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH PUTTING THE PROJECT TOGETHER

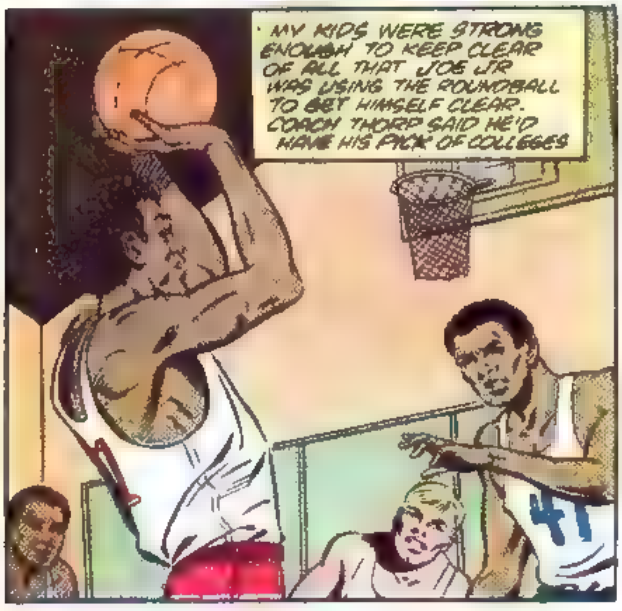
MR. PRESIDENT, I HAD EVERYTHING TO DO WITH IT.

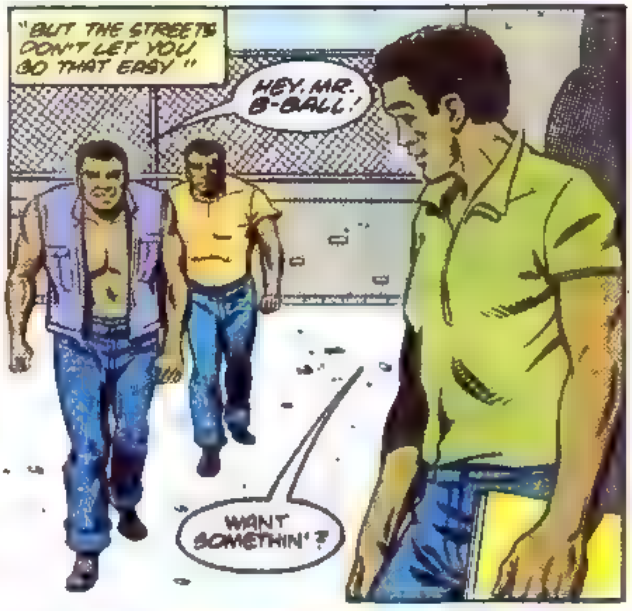
IT'S ALL IN HERE
ANOTHER FILE? MRS. WALLER, YOU'LL WEAR ME OUT!


WON'T KEEP YOU LONG FROM YOUR NAP, SIR. JUST A SHORT AND BITTER STORY MINE
THE REPORTS OF THE CRIME AND VIOLENCE THAT OCCUR IN CHICAGO'S CABRINI-GREEN ARE ALL TRUE. PLACE IS ALSO HOME TO LOTS OF GOOD, DECENT FOLKS TRYING TO FIND A WAY OUT OF THE CYCLE OF POVERTY
JOSEPH WALLER WAS ONE. AMANDA BLAKE WAS ANOTHER. THEY DECIDED TO TRY TO BREAK OUT TOGETHER. JOE WAS 20, I WAS 18. SOMETIMES YOU GOTTA START YOUNG WHILE YOU'RE STILL FOOLISH ENOUGH TO HOPE, TO DREAM
WE WANTED A FAMILY AND THE LORD SURELY BLESSED US WITH ONE. JOE JR AND DAMITA WERE FIRST. THEN CAME THE TWINS MARTIN AND JESSIE, AND THEN MY BABY, CORETTA. TIMES WERE HARD BUT THEY DIDN'T MAKE US HARD. WE GOT BY
OF COURSE, IN THOSE DAYS WE HAD SOME SOCIAL PROGRAMS TO FALL BACK ON. YOU DO REMEMBER SOCIAL PROGRAMS, DON'T YOU MR PRESIDENT?
NOW, NOW, MRS WALLER


"CABRINI-GREEN IS NOT AN EASY PLACE TO RAISE CHILDREN. MR PRESIDENT GANGS AIM STREET CORNERS. WALKING TO SCHOOL CAN BE A LIFE-AND-DEATH ADVENTURE.


"SCHOOL WAS NO SANCTUARY. DRUGS ABOUNDED. STILL DO. ALL THE EASY WAYS OUT OF DESPAIR: THE SHORT FIXES THAT LEAD TO HELL. THAT'S WHAT WE WERE UP AGAINST


MY KIDS WERE STRONG ENOUGH TO KEEP CLEAR OF ALL THAT. JOE JR WAS USING THE ROUNDBALL TO GET HIMSELF CLEAR. COACH THORP SAID HE'D HAVE HIS PICK OF COLLEGES


"BUT THE STREETS DON'T LET YOU GO THAT EASY"
HEY, MR. 8-BALL!
WANT SOMETHIN'?

WANT A DOLLAR

ALL I GOT IS CHUMP CHANGE!

Y'WANT SOME TOO?
UH UH GOT SOMETHING T'GIVE YOU!

BLAM!

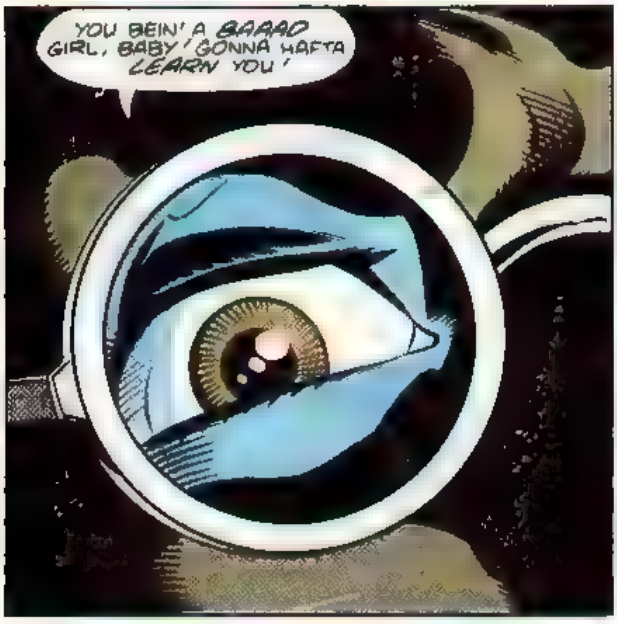
"THAT WAS THE FIRST FUNERAL."

'SIX MONTHS LATER, DAMITA WAS COMING HOME FROM CHURCH ONE BRIGHT SUNNY SUNDAY. AND THE DEVIL WAS OUT CALLING HIMSELF CANDYMAN."

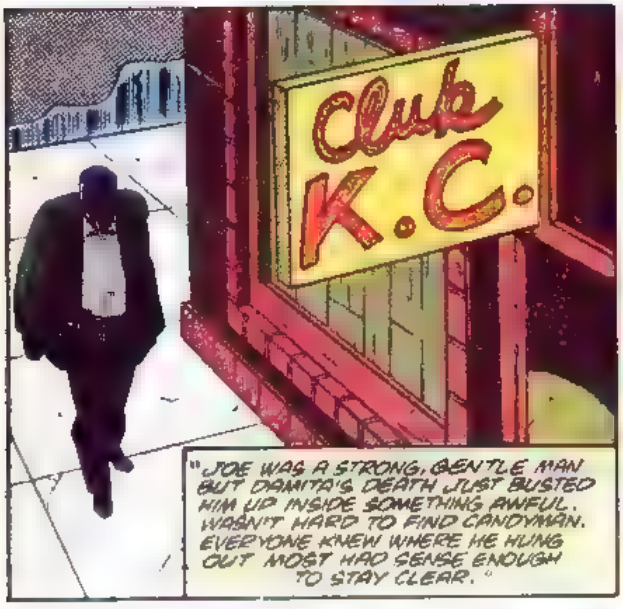
HEYYYY, SWEET LITTLE MAMA, WHAT SAY WE GO OVER T'MY PLACE AN' PARTY ? MAKE YOU FEEL GOOD, OH, YES, I WILL.

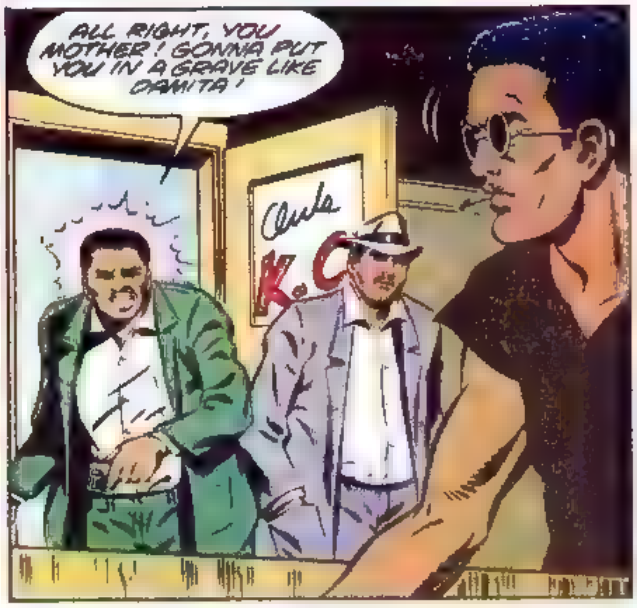
MISTER, WHATEVER YOU SELLING I DON'T [illegible]! NOW YOU LEAVE ME ALONE!

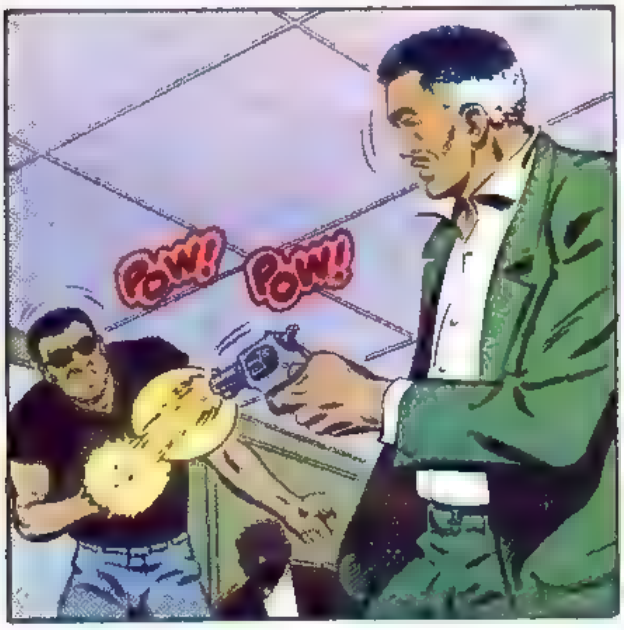
YOU WRONG, BABY! YOU WANT ME! I KNOW YOU DO!

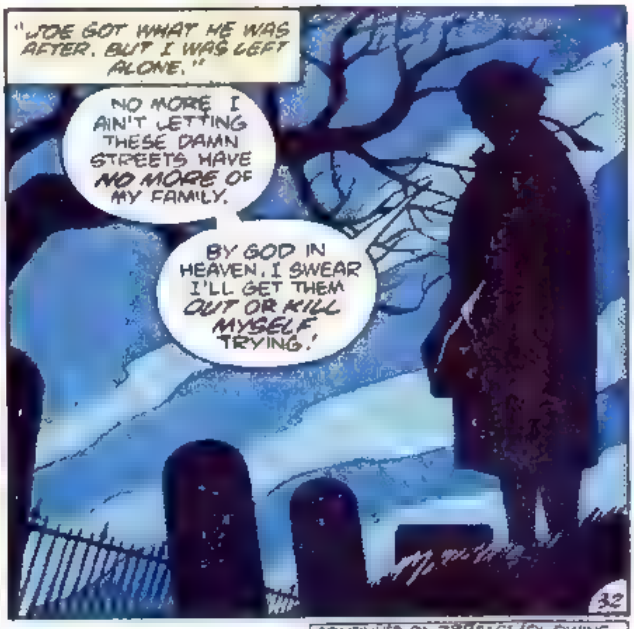

YOU BEIN' A BAAAD GIRL, BABY! GONNA HAFTA LEARN YOU!

"SHE SCREAMED BUT THE PEOPLE JUST CLOSED THEIR WINDOWS. IT TOOK FIFTEEN MINUTES TO STOP HER SCREAMING. WE KEPT THE COFFIN CLOSED WHEN WE BURIED HER."



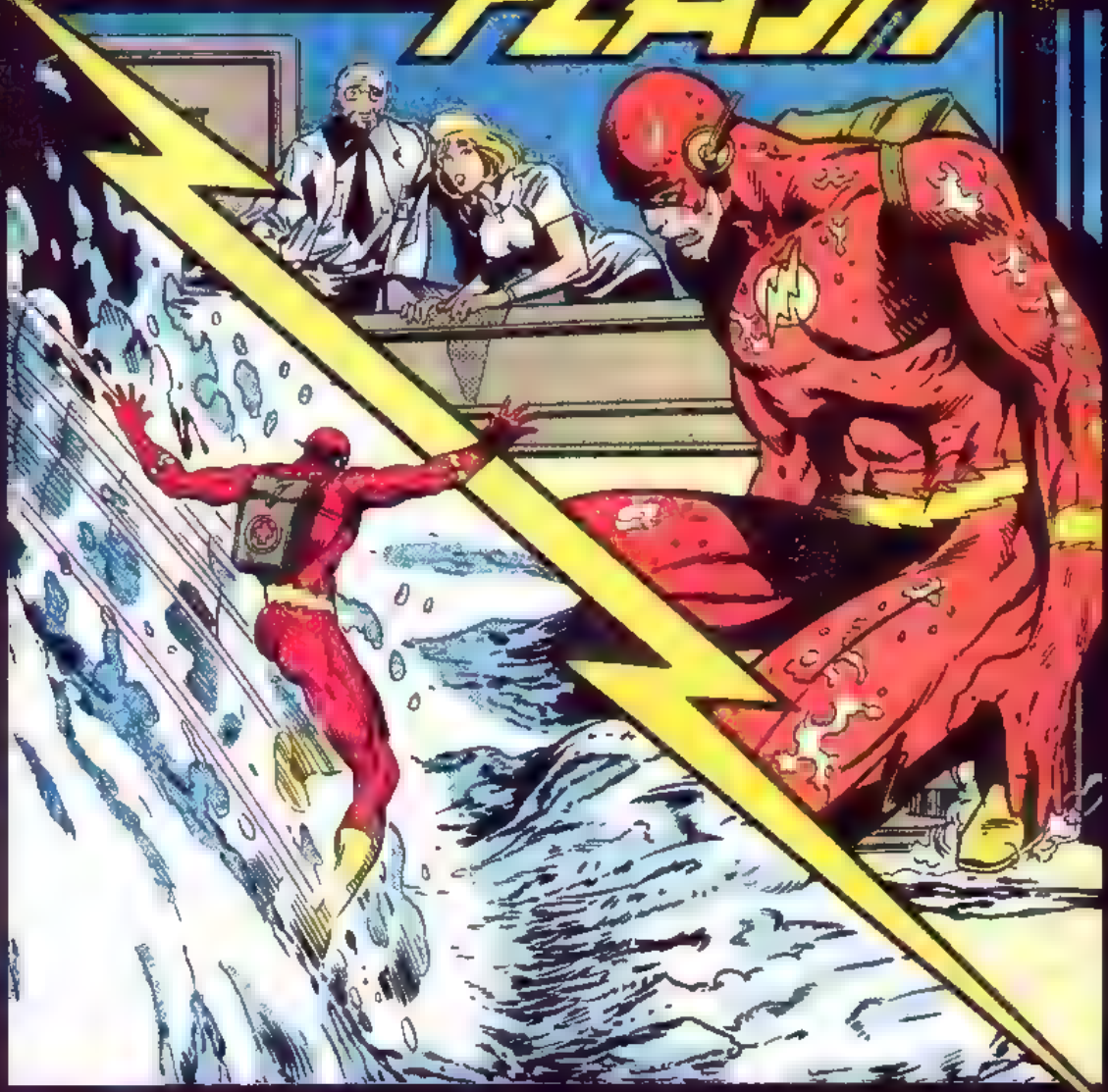






CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

HERE'S A FAST LOOK AT THE NEW FLASH



THE COSTUME'S THE SAME... EVERYTHING ELSE IS DIFFERENT!

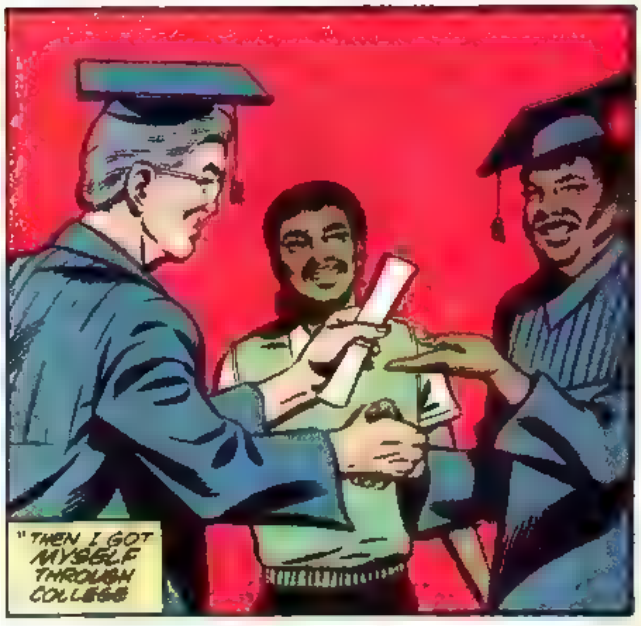
WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU EXPECT FROM BARON & GUICE?

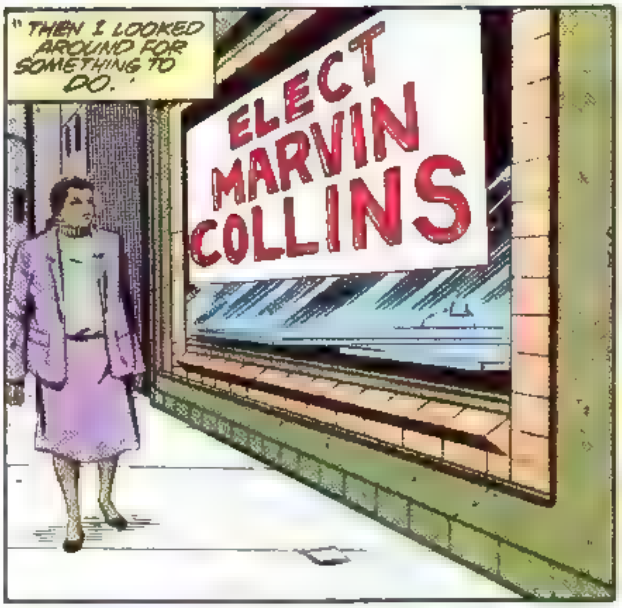
ON SALE IN MARCH

MIKE BARON • JACKSON GUICE • LARRY MAHLSTEDT

TM AND © DC COMICS INC. 1986

"IT DIDN'T KILL ME, THOUGH SOMETIMES I THOUGHT IT WOULD FIRST. I GOT THE LAST OF MY BABIES THROUGH COLLEGE


"THEN I GOT MYSELF THROUGH COLLEGE


"THEN I LOOKED AROUND FOR SOMETHING TO DO."
ELECT MARVIN COLLINS

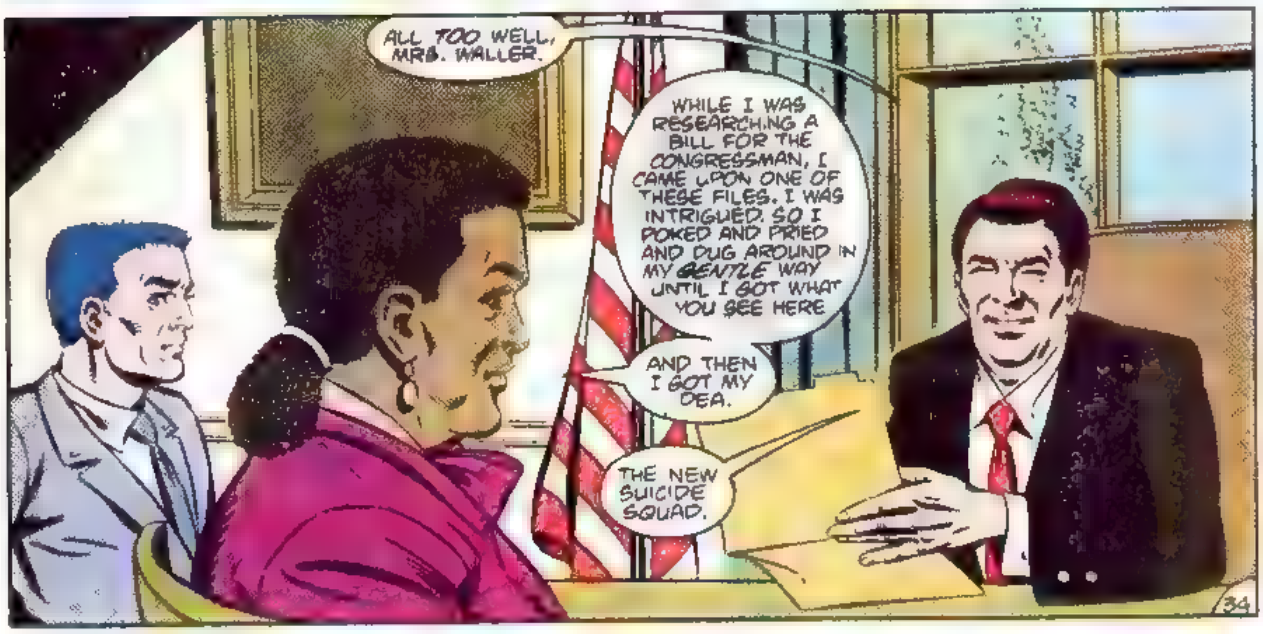
ELECT
BUT YOUR SUPPORT IS SO IMPOR... YES, I KNOW... YES, I UNDERSTAND. WELL, THANK YOU ANYWAY

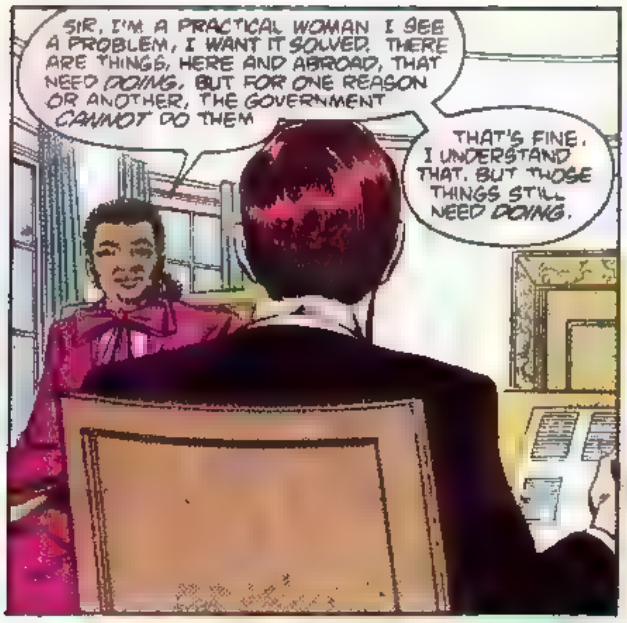
YOU MARVIN COLLINS?
YES. CAN I HELP?
I'VE READ SOME OF YOUR POSITIONS PAPERS. I THINK YOU'RE WHAT THE FOLKS AROUND HERE NEED IN CONGRESS
WHY, THANK--

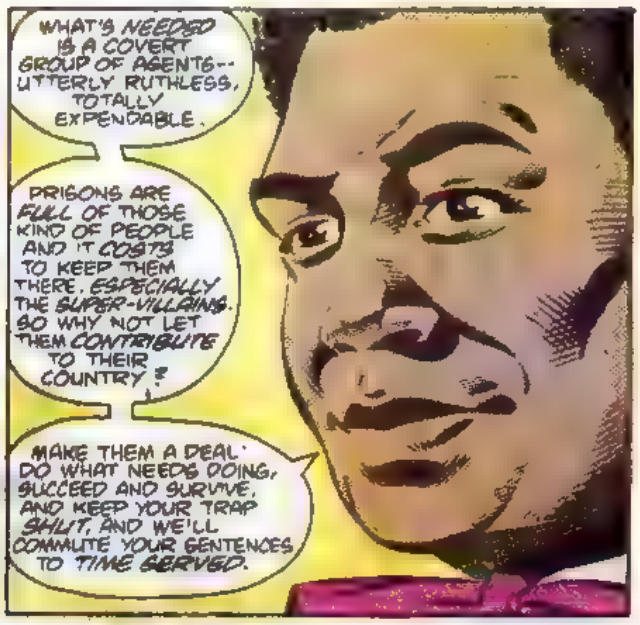
I ALSO THINK YOU DON'T STAND A PRAYER OF GETTING THERE. DON'T HAVE MACHINE BACKING--
DON'T WANT IT

ONE OF THE REASONS I LIKE YOU. YOU KNOW HOW THINGS SHOULD BE BUT YOU GOT NO SENSE OF HOW THINGS GO.
ME, I GOT ME A BRIGHT NEW POLI-SCI DEGREE AND I KNOW THE STREETS AND I THINK TOGETHER WE CAN GET YOU ELECTED. INTERESTED?

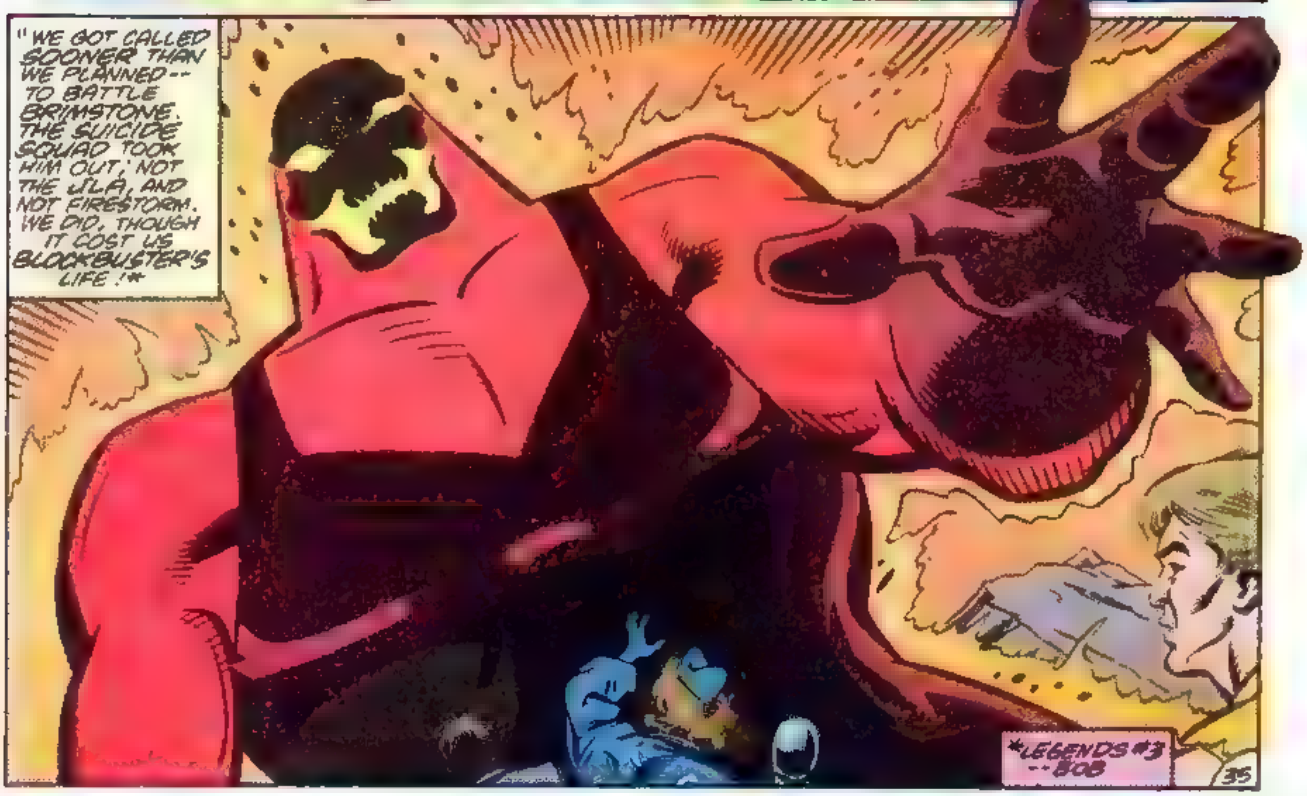
I CAN'T AFFORD NOT TO BE.'
I AM AMANDA WALLER AND AS OF THIS SECOND I AM YOUR NEW CAMPAIGN DIRECTOR!
"I PUT TOGETHER COLLINS' ORGANIZATION I HUSTLED CAMPAIGN MONEY AND THEN HUSTLED VOTES
"AND WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARED, MARVIN COLLINS WAS ON HIS WAY TO WASHINGTON AND I WAS GOING ALONG AS HIS AIDE. MR PRESIDENT, YOU KNOW AS WELL AS ANYONE HOW EFFECTIVE HE'S BEEN."

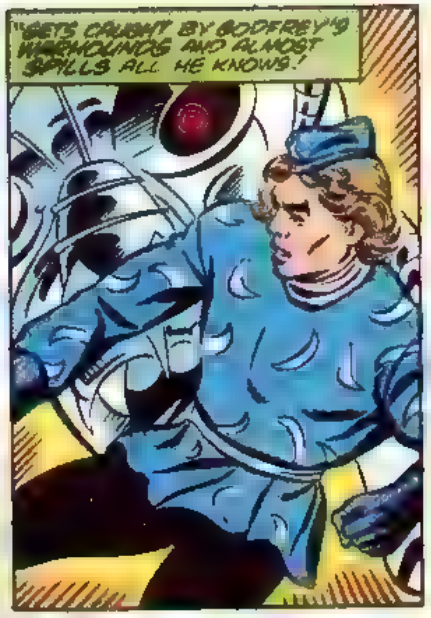

ALL TOO WELL, MRS. WALLER.
WHILE I WAS RESEARCHING A BILL FOR THE CONGRESSMAN, I CAME UPON ONE OF THESE FILES. I WAS INTRIGUED. SO I POKED AND PRIED AND DUG AROUND IN MY GENTLE WAY UNTIL I GOT WHAT YOU SEE HERE
AND THEN I GOT MY IDEA.
THE NEW SUICIDE SQUAD.

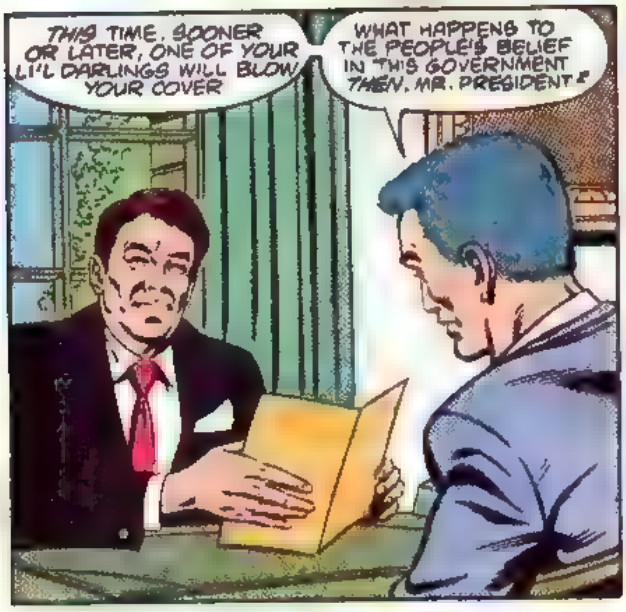

SIR, I'M A PRACTICAL WOMAN. I SEE A PROBLEM, I WANT IT SOLVED. THERE ARE THINGS, HERE AND ABROAD, THAT NEED DOING, BUT FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER, THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT DO THEM.
THAT'S FINE. I UNDERSTAND THAT. BUT THOSE THINGS STILL NEED DOING.

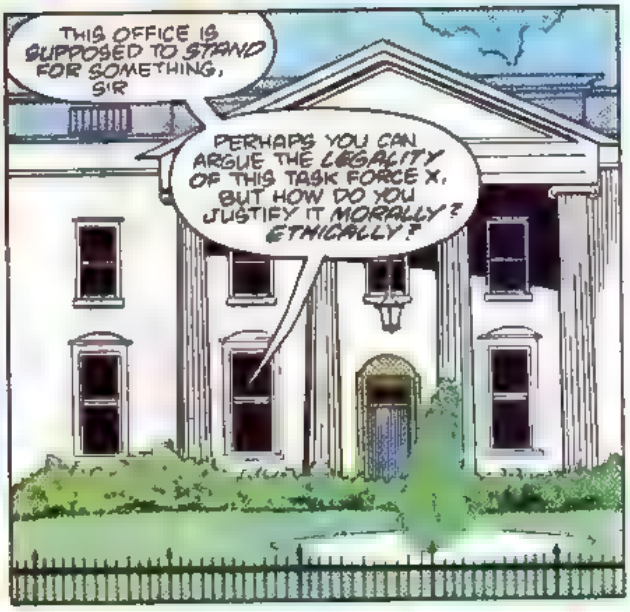

WHAT'S NEEDED IS A COVERT GROUP OF AGENTS-- UTTERLY RUTHLESS, TOTALLY EXPENDABLE.
PRISONS ARE FULL OF THOSE KIND OF PEOPLE AND IT COSTS TO KEEP THEM THERE, ESPECIALLY THE SUPER-VILLAINS. SO WHY NOT LET THEM CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR COUNTRY?
MAKE THEM A DEAL: DO WHAT NEEDS DOING, SUCCEED AND SURVIVE, AND KEEP YOUR TRAP SHUT, AND WE'LL COMMUTE YOUR SENTENCES TO TIME SERVED.

"GOT ENOUGH INTEREST TO FIELD A PILOT TEAM--CAPTAIN BOOMERANG, THE ENCHANTRESS, BLOCKBUSTER, AND DEADSHOT. RICK FLAG WAS BROUGHT BACK AS FIELD COMMANDER AND THE BRONZE TIGER WAS ADDED TO KEEP OUR LOSERS IN LINE.


"WE GOT CALLED SOONER THAN WE PLANNED-- TO BATTLE BRIMSTONE. THE SUICIDE SQUAD TOOK HIM OUT, NOT THE JLA, AND NOT FIRESTORM. WE DID, THOUGH IT COST US BLOCKBUSTER'S LIFE!*
*LEGENDS #3 --BOB





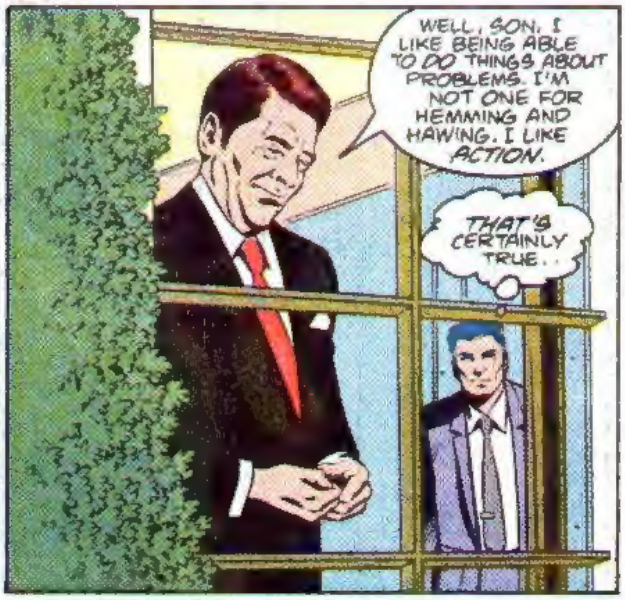


CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

THANK YOU, MR. PRESIDENT. YOU WON'T BE SORRY.
IF I AM, I KNOW WHERE TO FIND YOU, MRS. WALLER.

I HEAR YOU, MR. PRESIDENT. I'LL BE IN TOUCH.

THIS IS A MISTAKE, MR. PRESIDENT. I THINK IT'LL BE A BAD ONE.


WELL, SON. I LIKE BEING ABLE TO DO THINGS ABOUT PROBLEMS. I'M NOT ONE FOR HEMMING AND HAWING. I LIKE ACTION.
THAT'S CERTAINLY TRUE...

BESIDES, MRS. WALLER HAS BEEN A BIT TOO EFFECTIVE FOR CONGRESSMAN COLLINS; MAYBE THIS WAY I'LL GET SOME OF MY PROBLEM PROGRAMS PASSED.
A LITTLE EXTRA DIVIDEND NEVER HURT.

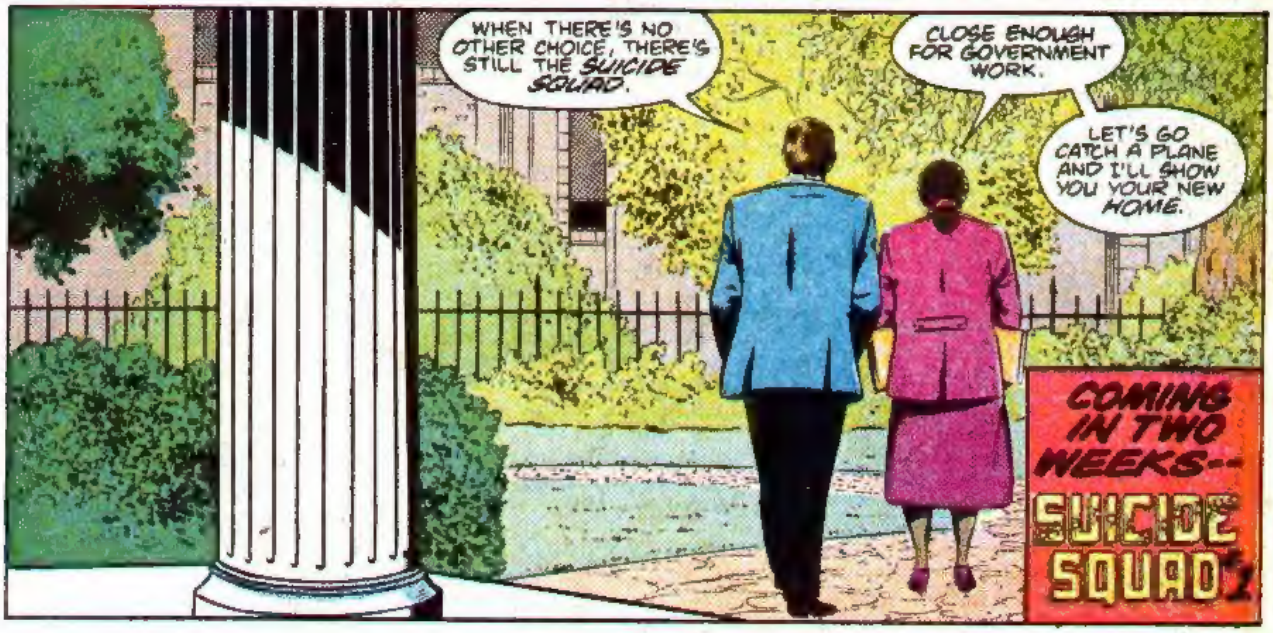
I HOPE THE COUNTRY ISN'T THE ONE WHO HAS TO PAY IT.

WELL ?
WE GOT IT! WE'RE IN BUSINESS!

TRY NOT TO LOOK SO ECSTATIC.
I TOLD YOU BEFORE; I KNOW MY DUTY. I'LL GET THE JOB DONE.

I NEED MORE THAN DUTY, FLAG. I NEED COMMITMENT! HEART AND SOUL STUFF!
SOME FOLKS HAVE ALREADY GIVEN ALL THEY HAD TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE WORLD WE'RE IN. IT'S UP TO US TO CARRY ON!

WHAT WE DO AND HOW WE DO IT WON'T BE EITHER PRETTY OR PLEASANT. BUT IT'S GOT TO BE DONE!
WE'RE HERE ONLY BECAUSE THERE REALLY IS NO ONE ELSE AND NO OTHER WAY OF DOING THE JOB AND THAT'S HOW IT IS.


WHEN THERE'S NO OTHER CHOICE, THERE'S STILL THE SUICIDE SQUAD.
CLOSE ENOUGH FOR GOVERNMENT WORK.
LET'S GO CATCH A PLANE AND I'LL SHOW YOU YOUR NEW HOME.
COMING IN TWO WEEKS--
SUICIDE SQUAD

SECRET ADMIRERS

L-2674

DC Comics Inc.
666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103
Jenette Kahn, President and Publisher
Dick Giordano, Vice Pres.-Executive Editor
Roy Thomas & Robert Greenberger, Co-Editors
Richard Bruning, Art Director
Terri Cunningham, Mgr.-Editorial Admin.
Pat Bastienne, Mgr.-Editorial Coordinator
Bob Rozakis, Production Manager
Paul Levitz, Executive Vice President
Joe Orlando, Vice Pres.-Creative Director
Ed Shukin, Vice Pres.-Circulation
Bruce Bristow, Marketing Director
Patrick Caldon, Controller

Dear Secret Origin Creators,

Once again, the ghost of CRISIS ON INFINITE EARTHS rears its ugly head.

In issue #9 we have the origin of Skyman (and it would have been nice to let all the non-INFINITY, INC. readers know why he is now called Skyman since nothing in his "secret origin" said anything about "sky" or him having the power of flight, or anything else you would associate with a name like Skyman) and it doesn't fit into what is commonly known as the post-Crisis Universe.

It has been said that following the Crisis no one would remember that it happened. Yet Syl Pemberton remembers: 1) a Green Arrow that never existed, 2) a "Seven Soldiers of Victory" that would have been six without the original GA, 3) that he was in a time warp for years (since there were *never* any Earths but one, how could he have been trapped for years on an "alternate Earth"?) and 4) that he was once a Justice Society member when the Justice Society never existed after the end of World War II according to a recent Special. So from a post-Crisis standpoint, this story made no sense.

By the way, would it have killed you guys to do a follow-up letting us know whatever happened to Stripesy?

The Flash origin was a little better. In future issues featuring '40s characters, you might consider having B.C. Boyer do some art. George Tuska's stuff was as usual ... drab.

T.E. Pouncey
Wichita, KS

The fallout from the Crisis has taken quite some time to settle and people are still trying to get matters straight. The recently released HISTORY OF THE DC UNIVERSE should have helped many, including yourself. But let's address some of your key points.

Those who were witness to the events at the dawn of time in CRISIS #10 are the only ones who remember the full extent of the Crisis. To the man on the street, it was when some monster came to Earth and took the lives of many heroes (the events of issue #12). So it's okay for Syl to remember the Crisis. But we goofed in not deciding fast enough about some details like the original Green Arrow and Speedy. Neither exist in the revised reality, as Syl's Golden Age team reverts to its other name, the Law's Legionnaires. He was still displaced through time by the fight with the Nebula Man and rescued by the JLA-JSA. The JSA, we note in this very issue, disbanded in the early 1950s only to reteam after the new age of heroes began in the 1960s.

Stripesy, INFINITY readers know, is still quietly running his garage, glad to be free of his world-saving duties.

Sorry you didn't like George's art but you can't win them all.

* * * * *

Greetings,

Roy Thomas faced two different challenges when he had to rewrite the origins of the Golden Age Flash and the Star-Spangled Kid. In the case of the Scarlet Speedster, he was given the chance to improve on a story which by "Golden Age standards" was a good story. As for the flag-draped team, he had to salvage a story, which by any standards was a terrible story.

As a writer, Thomas' attempt to improve on the existing Flash story worked, but as the editor, he should have made a better choice for the art team. The combination was not right for the character. When one reads the original story by Harry Lampert, one sees cartoony art and caricatured faces.

Lampert seemed to have realized that there is something visually outlandish about a man running at superhuman speed. Another artist who realized this was Mort Meskin when he drew Johnny Quick. An artist with a good sense of humor, like Joe Staton, would have been a better choice.

The thing I like about the 1940s Star-Spangled Kid stories was the teamwork which could not be found elsewhere. In the case of Batman and Robin, or Green Arrow and Speedy, or Aquaman and Aqualad, the adult partner was definitely stronger and smarter which resulted in a lopsided team. And despite the best intentions of some writers, there is no doubt who has been in charge of the Hawkman-Hawkwoman team.

Since his revival in the 1970s, the Kid never regained his unique status of the 1940s. Gerry Conway tried to make him a junior Starman in the Justice Society. Roy Thomas has made him the director of a team and not an equal component within the team.

This SECRET ORIGINS story featured the formation of the Star-Spangled Kid and Stripesy team. I wanted to see more of that special teamwork. It wasn't in this story.

Daryl S. Herrick
PO Box 111
Belchertown, MA 01007

We beg to differ with you about Syl's role in Infinity, Inc. Sure, he put the team together, agreed to be its director and is running the day-to-day operation. However, that does not make him a figurehead. We have seen him put his costume on and go fight the good fight again and again. He also has some extra experience the others don't, so he is quite an important component to that team.

* * * * *

Dear Roy and Bob,

SECRET ORIGINS #9 had its ups and downs, and thus was not the best issue yet, but it was good enough. I'm a firm believer that with two origins per issue, no issue can be totally good or totally bad.

One of the low points was the cover, the worst yet. Since the double-issues began, the covers had a good, solid look to them, certain feels to emphasize the character featured, with each character receiving equal time/space. Not #9—Star-Spangled Kid (or Skyman, if you prefer) hogged the cover, reducing the importance of both the Flash and Stripesy. The cover also had no "feel" to it, other than the standard multi-character action pose.

There was nothing really new about either of the origins, either, but they were enjoyable nonetheless, simply from a nostalgic view. The Golden Age Flash is one of my favorite characters, and the slight expansion on his pre-hero days was welcome. The Tuska/Acerno art was commendable, some of the best I've seen out of George recently.

The SSK-Stripesy origin was perhaps even slightly more enjoyable because I had never seen it in full detail before, even though I knew the basics. I find it funny that this team started out bickering and disliking each other. The Grindberg-Gustovich art had its weak points, but kept a Neal Adams-influenced feel throughout.

Overall, the issue gets an A- for story, a B for art. Not the best, but not the worst.

Anthony R. Cardno
238 Center Drive
Mahopac, NY 10541

* * * * *

Dear Editor,

SECRET ORIGINS #9 was a mixed bag. I enjoyed the origin of Skyman because of the Grindberg-Gustovich art. Both are unfamiliar to me, but I'm looking forward to more of their stuff. There's a tad of Neal Adams-inspira-

tion thereabouts in their work. I've always thought of Star-Spangled Skyman (and why not use that name?) as a bit one-dimensional, with the other members of INFINITY providing the color. But his origin showed somewhat deeper dimensions, and in the best of causes.

I was a tad disappointed in the origin of the Golden Age Flash since it lacked a career-long review. His career didn't stop being interesting in the 1940s. And with the "death" of the Justice Society, the first Flash appears to be getting the shortest shrift. He left a widow behind and that wasn't even mentioned in the special "good-bye" issue of INFINITY. Neither was the Flash himself, for that matter.

I am aware of George Tuska's long-term rep as one of the great ones (I gobble up back issues of *Crime Does Not Pay*), but when it comes to drawing super-speed I don't think he's the one. The speed sequences looked a little awkward and his style made the story look overly "square." Instead of modern art bringing 1940s stories into the present, Tuska stuck the Flash story in an old, musty time warp.

Charles D. Brown
39 Stockton Street
Brentwood, NY 11717

* * * * *

Dear Roy,

SECRET ORIGINS #9 was yet another great issue in this enjoyable series. I liked the combination of two Golden Age hero origins, though Star-Spangled Kid/Skyman is actually more of a contemporary character than the first Flash.

Anyhow, the SSK origin was well-done, providing some important background on Skyman, who is currently playing a significant role in INFINITY, INC. and on Stripesy, who is crucial to DC History and ALL-STAR SQUADRON. As you said in the letters page, this truly is one of the better origin stories of the day; the way Pat Dugan and Sylvester Pemberton come together was inventive, unusual, and pretty darn interesting, even when compared to modern origin tales. Having the two start out as hostile competitors, inspired by the same remark, was quite clever. In fact, they were both so proud and egotistical that it took a real life-or-death situation to bring them together. I wonder: if Pat and Syl hadn't been captured by the Bundists and locked in the boiler room, would they have *ever* joined forces?

The script was good, wisely focusing on the first teaming of SSK and Stripesy, and then summarizing the later adventures and events which modern fans are more familiar with. Only two things bothered me: 1) Exactly how old was Syl when he started adventuring? I assume he was 16 or 17 judging from his depiction but was he 13 or 14 as suggested at the beginning of the story? 2) How could the Seven Soldiers of Victory not know Wing was dead after battling Nebula Man? Were they in a trance in that time warp?

The second half of the issue's double-bill was also a nice piece, and was effective as both a refresher course on the ongoing Flash character in ALL-STAR SQUADRON and a final tribute to the Valhalla-bound tragic hero of recent years. I liked this story, a lot, Roy, mainly because it filled me in on some of the details about Jay Garrick's life which I was unfamiliar with. Never having read the original Flash's origin story, I only knew the bare bones of his beginning—that he inhaled "hard water" which made him the Fastest Man Alive. I never knew the other stuff—the tormenting romance with Joan, the facial vibrations, the Faultless Four, and the wonderful irony of his nickname, "Leadfoot." The script was smooth and intriguing, the dialogue believable, and the characterizations accurate, based on Jay's other adventures. The art was even good, though I am not a fan of George Tuska; his work always seemed blocky, uhdetailed and unrealistic. This time, though, inked by Jerry Acerno, Tuska's stuff is fine—smooth panel flow, resilient human forms and pleasing, uncluttered line work. I think George has finally found the ideal inker, and I hope the two work together again soon.

Robert T. Jeschonek
129 Hostetler Road
Johnstown, PA 15904

Everyone from the Law's Legionnaires remembers Wing's sacrifice, as revealed in JLA #103. Sorry about that.

* * * * *

SUGGESTIONS

Everyone has some idea of who or what they want to see in this book. Falling short of the Index to WHO'S WHO, we'll take a look at some of the requests that have come in from readers over the last number of months.

Robert Beach sent in a lengthy list broken down into Golden Age Heroes, Modern-Day Heroes, Golden Age Villains and Modern-Day Villains. We will get to villains at some time in our second year but for now it's all heroes, and most of the Golden Age heroes requested are already in the works. From the Modern Day list, none of your suggestions are planned but we'll consider some of them ... *Joe Mason* asks for Metamorpho, who is a good idea and we'll ask Mike Barr about it; Nightwing, for which we say, "buy last issue"; and the Joker. We won't do the Joker here but come summer, he will star in his own Special, coming from Alan Moore and Brian Bolland. Whatever facts we know about the Clown Prince of Crime will be revealed there ... *Eric Berry* also sent us a lengthy list, emphasizing the villains he wants to see. We'll do some villain fact-finding in the future ... *Phyllis E. Ziegler* comments that varying the lengths of the stories makes sense to her since not all origins are of equal proportion. We agree. She then goes on to point out an issue featuring short tales of the Clock and Ultra-Man, fronted by a Cyborg origin would be a winner. Sounds good to us but we'll see. Other thoughts include Pariah, The Spectre (see below), Plastic Man and Bouncing Boy (the latter two by Keith Giffen) ... *Rick Lamoreaux* asks for Wonder Woman I (by Richard Howell), Nightwing, Red Star, Captain Comet, Batgirl, and Black Orchid. Well, we did Nightwing, can't do WW (she doesn't exist anymore), and have Captain Comet set for part of our very first Annual, but more on that in next month's column. Batgirl shows up here in issue #20 by Barbara Randall and Rick Leonardi and Black Orchid is nowhere to be found ... *William W. McLamb* wants to see Katana, Amazing-Man, Mon-El, Johnny Quick, Metamorpho, Uncle Sam, Wildfire, Phantom Lady, and the late, lamented Huntress. Two votes for Metamorpho, hmmm. Johnny got his tale told in ALL-STAR SQUADRON #65 and we recently reprinted Wildfire's origin story in TALES OF THE LEGION #342. Uncle Sam turns up in issue #19 ... *Michael Hutchison* would be pleased to see any of the Zoo Crew, Captain Comet, Captain Atom, Flash II and Flash III, Elongated Man, Green Arrow, Black Canary, Red Tornado, and Nightshade. We just reintroduced Capt. Atom to the world so his true origin just got told; we cover Flash III's origin in his new title, debuting next month; Green Arrow's gets covered in his deluxe-format limited series coming this spring; and Nightshade will become an active member of SUICIDE SQUAD so look there for her tale.

* * * * *

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Next month we present twin tales of terror, so to speak. First we bring you the day the Deadman died. Find out what led to his fatal shooting in a new story by Andy Helfer, Kevin Maguire (the hot new artist on JUSTICE LEAGUE) and Dick Giordano. We also just witnessed the resurrection of the Spectre in his own new title. Well, how did that all happen? Roy and Michael T. Gilbert (of *Elric* and *Mr. Monster* fame) present the story plus his first cases. You won't want to miss a moment of next issue, will you?

Finally, this issue's creators, John Ostrander and Luke McDonnell, can be found within SUICIDE SQUAD #1, on sale in just two short weeks. Inker Dave Hunt reteams with Keith Giffen for the new DR. FATE mini-series, also debuting next month.

See you next time and until then, keep smiling!

—Bob Greenberger